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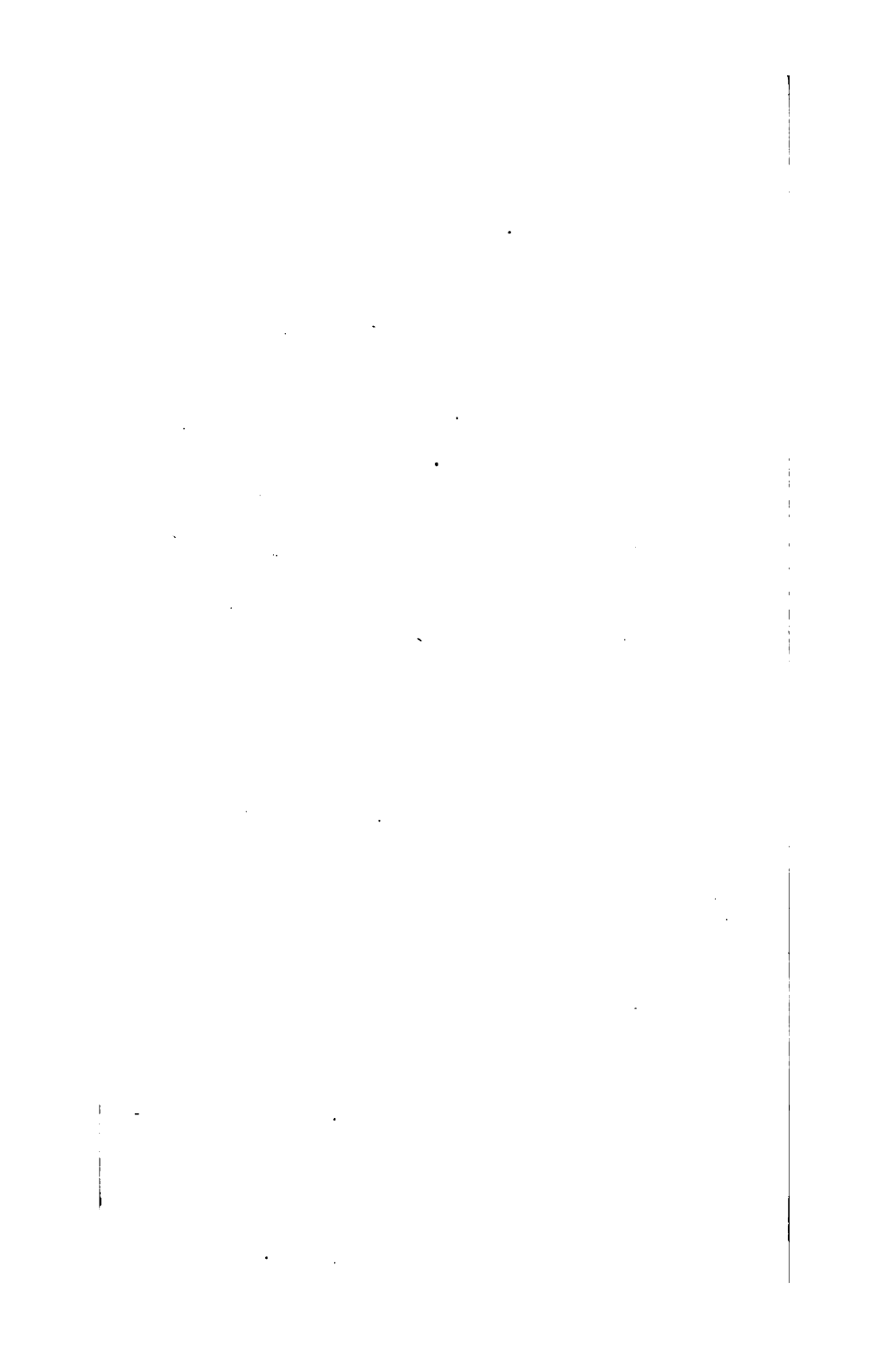


THE HISTORY
OF THE
OVERTHROW
OF THE
OMAN EMPIRE
AND THE
FOUNDATIONS
OF THE
PRINCIPAL EUROPEAN STATES

BY
W. C. TAYLOR, LL.D. M.R.A.S. F.S.S. &c.
OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN
AUTHOR OF A HISTORY OF FRANCE AND THE HISTORY OF THE
MISCELLANY. &c. &c.

LONDON:
OR WHITTAKER & Co.
17, MARK LANE.
1836.

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object of this work is to supply the deficient links, to shew how the ancient system of civilization was destroyed, and the new one formed.

But the history of what are called the Middle Ages, is not valuable merely as a connection between ancient and modern times; there is no period in the annals of the human race abounding more in the "philosophy that teaches by example," in incidents that at once gratify the imagination and improve the mind. There is a spirit of romance in the events that at once arrests the attention of the young; there is a simplicity in the order and sequence of the changes that places them within the reach of ordinary capacity; there is little or no disguise of the ends aimed at, and the means employed in the several revolutions of these ten centuries; and their history is therefore in some degree an alphabet or grammar of historical and political knowledge.

These acknowledged facts have often led to proposals for an abridgment of Gibbon: but since the days of that eminent historian, immense stores of information respecting the state both of Europe and Asia in the Middle Ages have been opened to us by eminent scholars in England, France and Germany. Oriental history especially has assumed a new aspect, and the age of the crusades has been freed from a mass of fables and contradictions. Under these circumstances, the author felt it his duty to consult the original sources, to search the chronicles of the West, and the annals of the East, with pleasure to himself, and as he hopes with profit to his readers.

In a work of such limited extent, it was impossible to dwell at any length upon the peculiar habits, customs, prejudices, and superstitions of the varied ages and nations that passed under his review ; he has, however, inserted in notes some of the most striking exemplifications of these characteristics, convinced these are an essential part of history, and are calculated to lead the young to reflect on the connection between habits of thought and habits of action. The Mussulman elegy on the capture of Jerusalem, by Godfrey, for instance, explains the character of the Mohammedans in that age, better than a long and laborious dissertation.

In spelling oriental names, the system of orthography proposed by Sir William Jones has been generally followed ; but where the names have been long familiar to English readers, it would seem like pedantry to change the popular form, and they have been left unaltered.

The last siege of Constantinople has been detailed at some length ; not merely on account of its importance, as the closing scene of this history, but because it concentrates in a brief space, a view of the chief causes that bring ruin on nations, and teaches lessons that must be useful, while human nature continues unchanged.

It was at first intended to add the list of original authorities to each chapter, but the design was abandoned, because such a parade of names, in a work designed for the higher classes of schools, and persons who have completed the ordinary course of education,

would seem an idle attempt to display learning, or an effort to impose upon the reader by sounding names.

The reader will observe a peculiarity in the numbering of the Chapters; believing that an analytical table of Contents is a great advantage, the author has specified as chapters subjects not expressly treated under separate heads; it was at first intended to have inserted such chapters, but the union of dissertation and narrative is clearly inexpedient. The titles are preserved to show that these subjects are not neglected, and to point them out as topics peculiarly worthy of attention.

In such a mass of names and dates it is scarcely possible to avoid errors; the following errata have been discovered since the work went through the press.

ERRATA.

Page	21, line 7,	for	<i>Ahopatene</i>	read	<i>Atropatene</i> .
—	59 — 13,	for	386	read	395.
—	66 — 31,	for	<i>Attila</i>	read	<i>Alaric</i> .
—	93 — 5 & 17,	for	<i>Lyaguus</i>	read	<i>Lyagu'us</i> .
—	103 — 2,	for	528	read	518.
—	117 — 2,	for	450	read	540.
—	173 — 14,	for	<i>Arisch</i>	read	<i>Arish</i> .
—	281 — 12,	for	1163	read	1063.
—	291 — 24,	for	1397	read	1097.
—	383 — 27,	for	1267	read	1207.
—	404 — 31,	for	1230	read	1308.

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HISTORY

OF THE

OVERTHROW OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE,

&c.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Political and Social Condition of the Roman Empire at the accession of Constantine.

IN the age of Constantine, the Roman empire still included the fairest portions of the earth surrounding the Mediterranean Sea ; but formidable enemies had appeared on all its frontiers, and rebellions were frequent in many of its provinces. Beginning at the western extremity of the
* empire, we find the Caledonians harassing the province of Britain, in spite of the wall raised to restrain their incursions, and the vigilance of the legions by which it was guarded. The coasts of Spain were frequently wasted by pirates, while the interior was exposed to attacks from the wild tribes that remained unsubdued in the Spanish mountains. Gaul was still more unfortunate ; the Romans had never been able to establish themselves permanently beyond the Rhine ; their best legions had fallen victims to the ferocious tribes of Germany ; and the river proved an insecure defence whenever a thirst for plunder, or a capricious desire of change, led the German warriors to quit their native forests for the fertile fields of their neighbours. The nature of their climate and their country tended to make

the Germans a warlike people ; but want of arms and discipline long tended to check their progress, while their fury was diverted by constant wars between the several tribes. Two confederacies formed by the Germanic tribes gave the barbarians unity of purpose and habits of obedience. The hordes that dwelt between the Lower Rhine and the Weser entered into an alliance for the preservation of their liberty, and took the name of Franks or Free-men : experience soon proved to them the value of union ; and the Romans, who had with difficulty repelled desultory inroads, were borne down by the confederate tribes. So early as A.D. 260, the Franks had not only forced the barrier of the Rhine, but extended their incursions from that river to the Pyrenees. Even these mountains did not check them ; they forced a passage into Spain, and laid the country waste with fire and sword ; when that country was exhausted, they seized on some vessels in the Spanish ports, and crossing over to Africa, filled the Mauritanian provinces with terror. Nor was this the only instance of maritime enterprise displayed by the Franks. Having been defeated by Probus, a large body of them had been sent to colonize the sea-coast of Pontus. After a very brief residence, they seized on some Italian vessels, escaped almost without notice through the Bosphorus and Hellespont, and entering the Mediterranean, gratified their desire of revenge and plunder by frequent descents on the coasts of Asia, Græce, and Africa. At length, after having sacked the ancient and opulent city of Syracuse, they steered their daring barks into the Atlantic Ocean, and having ravaged the coasts of Spain and Gaul, reached one of the mouths of the Rhine laden with immense booty. This surprising voyage greatly raised the courage of the Franks, and fostered the contempt with which they were beginning to regard the Roman power.

The second Germanic confederation was formed by a body of the Suevi, who were masters of the territory be-

tween the Oder and the Danube. Having been joined by volunteers from several other tribes, they called themselves *Alemanni*, or *All-men*—a name that intimated both their diversity of origin and community in courage. The *Alemanni* not only made incursions into Gaul, but (A.D. 256) invaded Italy, devastated Lombardy as far as Milan, and made the Romans tremble in their capital.

The provinces along the shore of north-western Africa seem to have enjoyed more tranquillity than any other portion of the Roman dominions. The Moors, indeed, were sometimes found discontented subjects, and the tribes of Mount Atlas occasionally plundered the plains, but there were no organized invaders on the frontiers of the province, and the Africans continued to enjoy peace and prosperity until they were involved in the general calamities of the empire.

The Illyrian provinces to the north-east of Italy, inhabited by a warlike and intrepid race, presented a formidable barrier to the German and Sarmatian tribes. The Vandals and Burgundians, whose influence extended from the Upper Rhine almost to the Danube, were seldom able to force a passage through these districts; and when by chance they succeeded, their return was intercepted by the imperial lieutenants.

The frontier of the Danube separated the Romans from their most dangerous enemies. Besides the German and Sarmatian tribes, a fierce people from the shores of the Baltic appeared on the northern banks of that river, and extended itself eastwards to the boundaries of Asia. These new enemies were called the Goths. They are said to have been originally a Scandinavian tribe, which, at some unknown period, crossed the Baltic, and formed a settlement in the modern kingdom of Prussia; thence they migrated southwards, following the course of the Borysthenes until they reached the coasts of the Euxine Sea, whence they extended their influence westwards along the Lower

Danube. The emperor Aurelian (A.D. 274) was forced to abandon Dacia to their dominion ; but, previous to this, they had established their supremacy in the Tauric Chersonese, whence they sent out fleets to ravage the coasts of Asia Minor. The nation of the Goths was divided into two portions, those between the Borysthenes and the Tanais were called Ostrogoths, or Eastern Goths ; those that settled in Dacia were named Visigoths, or Western Goths ; the former desolated Asia Minor, the latter ravaged the Roman provinces in the east of Europe.

The fertile and wealthy provinces of Asia Minor had long enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity, and were badly prepared to resist the fury of the Ostrogoths and the Heruli, who seem to have been a Gothic tribe. They had little to dread from the tribes in the Armenian and Georgian mountains, because the precautions taken to restrain their incursions had been found sufficient for several centuries, but they were unprepared to resist enemies from the northern coasts of the Euxine Sea, whence an attack could not have been anticipated. Hence those portions of the empire which in the age of Cæsar were most flourishing, had become in the time of Constantine feeble and almost desolate.

In Asia the Euphrates formed the great boundary of the Roman dominions. Trajan, indeed, advanced to the Tigris, and annexed Mesopotamia to the empire, but this conquest was abandoned by his successor. In the early ages of the Roman empire, the Parthian monarchs disputed the empire of Asia with the Cæsars ; but in the reign of the emperor Alexander (A.D. 226) a remarkable revolution occurred in Persia, which changed the entire aspect of the east. Ardeshi'r Babegan, who claimed, through his ancestor Sassan, descent from the ancient kings of Persia, expelled the Parthians, and restored Persia to its place in the list of nations. The history of the Sassanid monarchs up to the age of Constantine, is of too great importance to be summarily

dismissed, and will, therefore, be related in the following chapter.

The Syrian deserts separated the Romans from Arabia, a country over which they never established their authority. The Arabs, however, being divided into petty tribes that rarely acted in concert, were not deemed formidable enemies ; their incursions were annoying rather than dangerous.

Egypt is the last portion of the Roman empire that remains for us to describe : its great fertility, its advantageous situation for commerce, and the merited celebrity of Alexandria as the great mart of civilized Europe, apparently rendered this celebrated country the most valuable of the Roman possessions ; but the inconstant character of the Egyptians, insensible to kindness, and only to be won by fear, led to frequent revolts, which were quelled with difficulty, and punished with remorseless severity.

It will be seen from this rapid sketch, that we are about to enter on a history, deficient in that unity agreeable alike to the author and the reader. The causes of the overthrow of the Roman empire were many and various ; they operated in different places and at different times ; and we must, therefore, be prepared for several digressions, in order that we may trace the several effects of each. The Roman empire was, indeed, always deficient in a principle of unity : this was early discovered by its rulers, and they tried to supply its place by making the Latin language universal among their subjects. They succeeded in their northern and western provinces, for there, Latin had only to struggle against rude and barbarous dialects ; they failed completely in all the countries that had formed a part of the Macedonian empire, because the superiority of the Greek language, for every purpose of civilized life, was unquestionable, and indeed was readily confessed by the Romans themselves. The actual division of the empire into Grecian and Latin states was marked distinctly by

difference of language long before any of the emperors had meditated a formal partition.

When Augustus had established the imperial government, he preserved the forms of the republic, and thus rendered his power more dangerous and less suspected. Crimes that the most absolute despot would dread to attempt, may readily be perpetrated under the forms of a free constitution ; they shelter the monarch from personal responsibility ; they enable him to shift the blame on his senate or his council ; and if at any time popular indignation is excited, he may avert its effects by the sacrifice of some of his miserable agents. Had there been no senate, the death of Sejanus would scarcely have saved Tiberius from the consequences of his crimes. Less enlightened emperors did not perceive the advantages to be derived from these shadows of ancient institutions ; they trusted exclusively to the standing army, and thus made the soldiers masters of themselves and of the empire. Rome was subjected to a military despotism from the extinction of the race of the Antonines by the death of Commodus (A.D. 193) to the accession of Dioclesian (A.D. 284). The legions engaged in a constant struggle against the barbarians at a distance from the enervating vices of the capital, still preserved a remnant of the ancient Roman character : their nomination of their generals to supreme power was not only a consequence of the unsettled state of the succession, but often a matter of urgent necessity, from their being engaged in wars where the want of a supreme power would have led to defeat, perhaps to ruin. The distinguished generals they elected were in many instances well fitted to conduct the affairs of the empire, but the quick succession of rulers was fatal to the durability of reform. Besides, however pure the intentions of the emperors might be, they were prevented from improving the internal administration, by the necessity of protecting extended frontiers, assailed, as we have seen, by formidable enemies in every

direction ; and they had also to defend themselves against competitors, whose claims wanted only the idle formality of being acknowledged by the senate to be as valid as their own.

Dioclesian introduced an entirely new system which was completed by Constantine the Great. He substituted the despotism of the court for that of the camp, and rendered the sovereign absolute in form as well as in fact. His partition of the empire with a monarch of equal power, named an Augustus, and with two subordinate rulers called Cæsars, was a revolution that changed all the relations between the governors and the governed. The rulers of the empire being almost constantly absent from Rome were freed from the moral restraint, however slight, which the authority of the senate and the name of the republic had imposed upon their predecessors. Rome ceased to be the chief object of importance to those who aimed at empire, and the prætorian guards, who had previously bestowed sovereignty at their pleasure, were at once stripped of all political importance. It is true that the provinces had now to support four rulers, four courts, and four armies ; but it is equally true that this division of power protracted the fate of the empire, whose dangers were too great to be provided against by a single mind.

The religious state of the empire next requires our attention ; the entire edifice of Paganism was shattered in pieces, and Christianity was about to be erected on its ruins. As a system of religious belief influencing human action, Paganism had long since lost its influence, even over the vulgar ; an unmeaning ritual was still preserved, and hereditary observances practised, but for them no one could assign a reason, and few troubled themselves to inquire. The philosophers of the age rejected religion altogether, or, as at Alexandria, were engaged in forming "cunningly devised fables," derived from all the superstitions of the known world. The popu-

lation of Alexandria in the third and fourth centuries consisted of the most motley miscellany of nations, religions, and sects, that had ever been brought together in one city. Its philosophers united the gloomy philosophy of India with the imaginative fictions of Greece, and formed from this incongruous mixture speculative systems that long maintained a fatal influence over the human mind. In ancient Rome every act of government was connected with religion, and hence Augustus took care to unite the imperial with the pontifical authority. The claim to divine honours made by many of the emperors, gave them a strong interest in the maintenance of polytheism, it allowed them to demand obedience as gods upon earth, and even those who made no such impious pretence, required that, as pontiffs, they should be regarded as representatives of Deity, and that the military oaths should be sworn by their name. It is erroneously imagined that such madmen only as Nero and Caligula indulged the passion of deification; Marcus Aurelius, whom it has pleased some authors to describe as the model of sovereigns and the hero of philosophers, enrolled his infamous wife, Faustina, in the number of the goddesses. Though Paganism was thus a system of weakness, because of acknowledged absurdity, the most influential persons in the empire were interested in its support; it gave a sanction to the authority of the rulers, it enabled the philosophers to gratify their pride by triumphing over the vulgar; for it must not be forgotten, that an essential part of ancient philosophy was contempt and hatred towards "the profane rabble," as the lower orders were insolently designated. Christianity was the philosophy of the people; in the words of its Divine Author, "to the poor the Gospel is preached;" addressing itself to a class despised by philosophic pride, and neglected by pontifical luxury, it had taken a fast hold in the empire before its progress awakened the jealousy of the ruling powers. Cruel persecu-

tions only increased its strength, for every martyrdom was a fresh testimony to its eternal truth, a testimony more intelligible and more conclusive than all the eloquent reasoning of the schools. Its progress had been so rapid, that when Constantine declared it to be the religion of the empire, he ratified rather than established its supremacy. Morals under the empire were at the lowest ebb ; vice and criminality had attained such a height that no one dreamed of concealing his iniquity. Profligacies that will not bear description were unblushingly exhibited in the face of day ; at such a time the virtues for which the early Christians were distinguished, produced a very powerful effect : their blameless lives, amid surrounding corruption, proved the superiority of the faith they professed, and extorted approbation even from their most virulent enemies.

In an empire that possessed neither aristocracy nor commons, there is little to be said respecting the legislative or executive power ; both centre in the will of the sovereign. There is, however, reason to believe that the commercial regulations of the empire were formed on wise principles, taxes were generally moderate, and both internal and foreign commerce, in spite of the incessant wars, were in a flourishing condition. A change for the worse commenced after the partitions introduced by Diocletian ; the number of dependents on the courts became extravagantly great, transit-duties and customs were levied for their support, to the great injury of trade, and the weight of taxation was increased as the power to bear it was diminished.

Rome had long been declining in political importance ; its citizens were a medley from every quarter of the empire, and in the age of Constantine we vainly look in the lists of its magistracy for the names that were familiar to us in the early period of its history. The shows of the amphitheatre alone engaged the attention of a city that had once regulated the affairs of the civilized world, and so far were

political events from exciting interest, that the populace did not believe the majesty of the empire shaken, until the enemy stood at the very gates of the city. Recent victories over the Germans, and the formation of a good war establishment in Gaul, seemed to have secured the tranquillity of Western Europe ; but in the East the Goths, and still more the Persians, threatened the overthrow of the Roman power ; and necessity as well as choice influenced Constantine in transferring the seat of government to Byzantium. Had he not done so the Sassanides would in all probability have made good their claim to the ancient empire of Cyrus.

CHAPTER II.

The Restoration of the Persian Empire under the Sassanides.

THE most powerful empire founded by the successors of Alexander was that of the Seleucidæ, whose dominions included the greater part of Central and Western Asia. In the reign of Antiochus Theos (B. C. 256), a rebellion, provoked by his intolerance and cruelty, broke out in Persia ; the leader of the revolt was Ashk, or Arsaces, a native of Parthia, or the districts in the north-east of Persia ; he succeeded in establishing his independence, and founded the Parthian or Arsacid dynasty. From comparing the obscure history of this revolution with similar events that have occurred in Asia, we may reasonably infer that the Parthians belonged to the wandering and warlike tribes, which from the remotest ages have possessed the countries east of the Caspian Sea ; they were consequently as foreign to the Persians as the Greeks had been, and to the latest period were distinguished from them by their religion, their language, and their modes of life. Eastern and western writers concur in representing the

Parthian empire as a confederation of principalities, not unlike the Polish monarchy in the time of the Jagallous¹. The unsettled condition of these small states, and the jealousy of the Parthians, with whom it was a national maxim, that no stranger should be allowed to pass through their country, destroyed the East India trade which Alexander had taken such pains to establish. The commerce between the East and West thenceforward took its road through Palmyra and Alexandria, and was the source of the great splendour and prosperity enjoyed by these celebrated cities. The Macedonian cities in Persia were allowed by Arsaces to retain their privileges; Seleucia in particular was highly favoured, and the management of the royal mint entrusted to its citizens. A strong predilection for Grecian manners and literature was displayed by all the Arsacid monarchs, but their nomade habits of life, which were never wholly forsaken, prevented them from

¹ "The Parthians," says St. Martin in his admirable Memoir on the origin of the Arsacidæ, "a nation of cavalry completely sheathed in steel, and possessing a race of horses unmatched for strength and speed, (as their successors, the Turcomans, do at the present day,) overran the feeble Persians, almost without encountering resistance, and formed a true military aristocracy, while they degraded the conquered into a herd of slaves. Thus the invaders became the feudal lords of the vanquished nation; or rather, the nation itself, (as was the case with the Normans in England,) for the rest were serfs attached to the soil. Indeed, every arrangement of the feudal system may be found in the Arsacidan government; the same customs, the same institutions, nay, the same dignities and officers. A constable is discovered commanding their armies; margraves or marquesses defending the marches (frontiers); barons and feudal suzerains of every grade; knights and men-at-arms; the same limited number of the noble and free; the same vast multitude of serfs and vassals. The Parthian cavalries, locked man and horse in complete armour, may well represent the European knights of the Middle Ages; like them, the Parthian horsemen formed the strength of the army; like them, they bore down all opposition in their furious charges, whilst the infantry was disregarded and despised." — *Journal Asiatique*, Vol. I.

being benefitted by Grecian civilization, or corrupted by Grecian luxury. The Parthian empire extended itself at the expense of the Syrian and Bactrian monarchies during the space of two hundred years, when it was brought into collision with the growing greatness of the Romans (B. C. 53). It is needless to mention that the Romans even in the zenith of their power, could make no permanent impression on the Parthian kingdom. This must not, however, be attributed solely to the valour or skill of the Arsacid monarchs, the greater part of their success was owing to the nature of their territories, and their singular mode of warfare. The Parthian frontier, extending from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, consisted of lofty and barren mountains, of wide and rapid streams, of naked and extensive deserts. In whatever direction invaders advanced, the country was laid waste before them; attacks were made not on the army but on the detachments that escorted its supplies, clouds of light cavalry hovered round the hostile columns, harassing the foe by incessant skirmishes, cutting off stragglers, striking down with the unerring arrow every individual conspicuous in the ranks, but baffling every attempt to bring them to a regular engagement. Such a mode of warfare, admirably suited to the Parthian character, to their matchless steeds, and to the country in which they fought, ensured a superiority against which bravery and discipline contended in vain. The Parthian monarchs were honourably distinguished by their tolerant spirit; we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, that there were Jewish colonies in their dominions, and we are assured by ecclesiastical writers that they generously protected the Christians who fled to them during the early persecutions.

Ardevan, called by western writers Artabanus IV., was the last of the Parthian monarchs; he invaded the Roman territories to punish the treachery of the emperor Caracalla, but that prince having been murdered, Ardevan

had to encounter his more able successor Macrinus. The battle that ensued lasted two entire days (A.D. 219); the Parthians finally obtained a doubtful victory, which was dearly purchased by the loss of their bravest warriors. The Persians, who had long been weary of the Parthian yoke, took advantage of Ardevan's weakness to restore their national independence. They chose for their leader Ardeshi'r Babegan¹, a descendant of Sassan, who claimed the ancient kings of Persia as his ancestors. Babek, the father of Ardeshi'r, joined in the revolt, and soon conquered the province of Fars; but dying soon after, he bequeathed the province to his eldest son Shah-poor, and thus raised a civil war between the brothers. Ardeshi'r triumphed, and soon after conquered Istakhar, the ancient Persepolis, at that period regarded by the Persians with as much veneration as Jerusalem by the children of Israel. The insurrection soon assumed the form of a national war; to increase the spirit of his followers, Ardeshi'r proclaimed the restoration of the ancient Magian religion, and displayed as his standard the blacksmith's apron, popularly believed to have been the old national banner of Persia.

The Persian historians relate that their country was once subject to a cruel tyrant named Zaha'k. "When his oppression had continued a long time," says Mirkhond, "Gava'h of Ispaha'n, two of whose sons had been put to death by the tyrant, closed the door of his forge, and opened the gates of rebellion in the face of Zaha'k: he took from his waist the piece of leather worn by blacksmiths, when at work, about the loins, and fixed it on a pole: through the tyranny and excessive violence of the king, he cried aloud, and excited the people to revolt." Mirkhond goes on to tell us that the heroic Gava'h conquered and slew Zaha'k, after which he bestowed the crown

¹ Called by the Greeks Artaxerxes I. The Greek historians assert that he was of mean parentage.

of Persia on Feridoon, a descendant of Jemaheed. Feridoon honoured his benefactor during his life, and after his death "sent orders to Ispahā'n, to deliver up the estate and chattels of Gava'h to his heirs; excepting the banner of Gava'h, which he demanded, and having ornamented it with precious stones, placed it in the treasury. This banner was only produced on the day of encounter, and in the field of battle, when the eyes of the ever-victorious troops were animated with delight, and their hearts with fortitude on beholding it; every succeeding monarch enriched it by the addition of a precious diamond, and this custom continued until the time of Omar, the son of Khetta'b¹, when, at the victory of Ka'deseh, it fell into the hands of the true believers: the piece of leather was burned by command of Omar, and the precious jewels were divided amongst the indigent and objects of charity²."

Whatever doubts may be entertained respecting the history of this celebrated banner, the effects of its adoption by Ardeshi'r are undeniable; from the moment that he displayed this popular standard, the Persians were victorious in every engagement, until at length Ardeva'n lost his kingdom and his life, in the valley of Hormuz (A.D. 226), and Ardeshi'r was hailed on the field Shah-in-shah, that is, king of kings.

The first care of the new monarch was to restore the ancient religion. An assembly of the Mobeds, or priests, from every part of the kingdom was convoked, and by their exertions a code was formed of all the remaining laws and institutions of Zoroaster. The sacred fire was rekindled on the Magian altars, and every other form of worship strictly forbidden within the restored kingdom of Persia. This great revolution suddenly arrested the progress of

¹ See Chap. XIII.

² Shea's Mirkhond, p. 137. An admirable translation of a highly curious and interesting work.

Christianity eastwards, and it was thrown back upon the western provinces of Asia, and upon Europe; but the numerous heresies of the third and fourth centuries showed that many Christians had been tainted by the wild speculations of Magian superstition.

Ardeshi'r, as successor of Cyrus, claimed the empire of Asia; he attacked Armenia, where the Arsacidæ still preserved a shadow of royalty, but was driven back with loss; he sent an embassy to the Roman emperor, with a message in the usual style of oriental bombast, stating that "The Great King commanded the Romans and their Prince to depart out of all Syria and Asia Minor, and to restore to the Persians all the countries to the east of the Ægean and Pontic Seas, as belonging to them by hereditary right." Irritated by this insolent message, the emperor Alexander Severus imprisoned the ambassadors, and invaded Persia, where he inflicted a severe defeat on Ardeshi'r. The Romans, however, were unable to retain their conquests; Ardeshi'r soon repaired the evils produced by the invasion, and spent the remainder of his reign in tranquillity. Before his death he resigned the sceptre to his son Shah-poor¹, having previously given him some excellent instructions in the art of government².

Shah-poor, immediately after his accession (A.D. 242), made Al Modain (the ancient Ctesiphon) his capital; thus bringing his court close to the frontiers of the empire with which he had resolved to contend for supremacy, and in some measure forcing on the Romans a similar change in their seat of government. His first enterprise was the invasion of Mesopotamia, which had been seized by an Arabian prince named Manizen. The strength of the

¹ Called by western writers, Sapores I. His mother is said to have been an Arsacid princess, the daughter of Ardevan.

² They are preserved by Ferdausi and Mirkhond. See Baron de Sacy's *Mémoires sur Diverses Antiquités de la Perse*, p. 281.

usurper's castle enabled the usurper long to set the Persians at defiance. At length his daughter Nazirat, having fallen in love with Shah-poor, betrayed her father and the castle to him; but her treachery was afterwards punished by a cruel death¹. Having conquered Mesopotamia, Shah-poor laid siege to Nisibis, the bulwark of the Roman dominions, which was forced to yield after a vigorous resistance. Taking advantage of the commotions that distracted the empire, he made several other important conquests, and at length laid siege to Edessa. The emperor Valerian hastened to the relief of this important city, but he was defeated and made prisoner, whether by the cowardice or treachery of his soldiers is uncertain. Valerian died in prison, but the tale of his being tortured by his captors is generally discredited. Odenatus, the husband of the celebrated Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, checked the victorious career of Shah-poor, and prevented the Persians from completing the conquest of Asia.

The celebrated heresiarch Mani, or Manes, first began to propagate his doctrines in the reign of Shah-poor. He was

¹ Mirkhond's account of the fate of this parricidal princess is too curious to be omitted. "Nazirat was sent by Shah-poor to his seraglio, and treated with the utmost tenderness. One morning she complained of a pain in her side, that had prevented her from sleeping, and kept her in torture the entire of the preceding night. They inquired what could have caused this pain: her bed was searched, and a single rose-leaf was found in it, which proved to be the sole cause of her agony. Shah-poor, astonished, asked how she had been educated by her father so as to have such a very delicate constitution. Nazirat replied, that she had been fed upon honey and sugar, and never permitted to taste water unless sweetened. 'If,' cried the monarch, "you could repay by treason such astonishing parental tenderness, by what other ties of gratitude can you be bound?" At the same time he ordered her to be tied by the hair to the feet of a wild horse; and the bounding and prancing of the enraged animal soon made her undergo the punishment due to her infamous treachery."—*Mémoires sur Diverses Antiquités de la Perse*, p. 289.

a Magian by birth, but in early life became a convert to Christianity; having travelled through northern India and China, he acquired a knowledge and love of the gloomy mysticism taught by the ascetic philosophers of those countries. Without entering more minutely into the history of creeds, we need only say that the one called Buddhism, which has prevailed in the countries surrounding India from remote ages, and which once flourished in Hindostan itself, produced a strong impression upon the mind of the traveller, and he embraced some of its leading tenets. Returning to Persia, he promulgated a new creed, in which the doctrines of Christianity were confounded with the superstitions of India and Persia. To entice converts, he declared that he was the Paraclete or Comforter promised by Jesus Christ, and as his name Mani, or Menahem, actually has this signification in the Syriac language, many were induced to listen to his pretensions. Shah-poor at first became a convert, but finding that the Mobeds were likely to resent and punish his apostacy, he returned to his ancient creed, and forced Mani to seek refuge in Turkestan. It was during this exile that the pretended prophet composed his gospel, of which only a few fragments have been preserved to our times.

Shah-poor was succeeded by his son Hoormuz¹ (A.D.

¹ Called Hormisdas by the western writers. Mirkhond gives the following singular account of the birth of Hoormuz:—"Ardeshi'r, having vanquished and slain Mahrec, a petty king in Persia, took care to exterminate his family, because an astrologer had predicted that one of Mahrec's posterity should inherit the throne of Iran (Persia). One of Mahrec's daughters escaped his cruelty, fled through the desert, and found refuge in the hut of a shepherd. Time rolled on; and one day, Shah-poor, the son of Ardeshi'r, wearied by the chase, sought refreshment in the same hut, and asked the shepherd for a draught of water. Mahrec's daughter brought him a pitcher; and no sooner did Shah-poor see her, than he became enamoured of her charms. He asked the shepherd to whom the girl belonged, and the man answered she was his daughter. Shah-poor

271), who had before his accession given the most convincing proofs of his virtuous disposition. Having been entrusted by his father with the government of Khorassan, he administered the affairs of the province with so much wisdom, that all his subjects were enraptured with their prince. Some of the courtiers infused suspicion of his son into the mind of Shah-poor, but when the prince heard of it, he cut off one of his hands, and sent it to his father as a proof of his fidelity. Shah-poor bitterly lamented his groundless jealousy, and entreated his son's forgiveness. Hôormuz reigned only one year; he was succeeded by his son Baharam¹.

The reign of Baharam is chiefly remarkable for the execution of the impostor Mani, who had returned to Persia by the king's invitation. Whether Baharam really entertained any idea of embracing the new creed, or whether his apparent kindness was an artifice to lull suspicion, has been disputed; but no sooner was Mani in his power, than he convened a council of the Mobeds, and summoned Mani to plead the cause of his creed before the assembly. The heresiarch was overpowered by the multitude of his adver-

then invited the shepherd to accompany him, but the girl, who was very strong, held him fast, and would not permit him to stir. Astonished at this, Shah-poor inquired the reason of her conduct, and she confessed that she was the daughter of Mahrec, and dreaded lest she might be discovered and slain by Ardeshi'r. The Prince promised inviolable secrecy, and persuaded her to marry him. Hoormuz was the fruit of their union, and his birth was for a long time kept concealed from Ardeshi'r. One day, Ardeshi'r, unexpectedly entering Shah-poor's palace, saw the infant Hoormuz, and was struck with the interesting countenance of the child. He asked his son to whom the boy belonged, upon which Shah-poor related all the circumstances. Ardeshi'r, transported with joy, exclaimed, 'Thanks be to God! I am delivered from the alarms caused by the predictions of the astrologers!' He thenceforward treated Hoormuz as his favourite grandson."—*Mémoires sur Diverses Antiquités de la Perse*, p. 291.

¹ The Varames I. of the western writers.

saries ; sentence of death was pronounced, he was executed with cruel tortures, and many of his leading followers shared the same fate. But the Manichæan heresy did not perish with its author, it spread even into Western Europe, where traces of it were to be found so late as the fifteenth century.

Baharam II.¹ was the next sovereign (A.D. 276) ; he proved far inferior to his predecessors. His nobles entered into a conspiracy against him, but the Mobed of the Mobeds, as the chief priest of Persia was called, entreated that he might be permitted to make an effort to recall the monarch to a sense of his duty. They agreed, and, by the pontiff's advice, withdrew from court. Baharam found his palace suddenly a perfect solitude ; he wandered through its silent halls, and felt oppressed by the sense of loneliness. At this moment the chief Mobed appeared, and forcibly represented to Baharam the evil consequences of his conduct. The monarch was penetrated with remorse, when the pontiff contrasted his inglorious reign with the brilliant career of the preceding sovereign, and declared his firm resolution to adopt for the future a better course of life. This pleasing intelligence was communicated to the nobles, who returned to their allegiance, and resumed their duties in the palace. But Baharam, though improved, could not wholly subdue the perversity of his nature ; during his reign, the emperor Caius gained several important victories over the Persians, and captured the important city of Ctesiphon ; the emperor's premature death alone saved the throne of the Sassanides from ruin.

Baharam III. succeeded his father (A.D. 293), and, as we are told, ascended the throne with great reluctance. An interesting account of his address to his subjects is given by the Persian historians. " On taking possession of the crown, he spake these words : ' I have a just claim to this crown, as I am of royal descent ; my only aim shall be to

¹ Varames II. of western writers.

procure for my subjects tranquillity and happiness.' The soldiers and the people having raised their voices to proclaim his praise, and invoke blessings on his head, he added, 'All my confidence is in the goodness of God, through him alone can we hope for success. If God spares my life, I trust so to conduct myself that every one who hears my name shall bless it; if, on the other hand, the angel of death removes me prematurely, I trust that God will watch over the kingdom, and save it from ruin¹.' The last words were ominous: this admirable prince died after a brief reign of four months, and was succeeded by his brother Narsi.

It has been already mentioned that a branch of the Arsacidæ retained possession of the kingdom of Armenia; the Persians eagerly desired to add this country to their dominions, and when force failed, they procured a pretended fugitive from Persia, named Anak, to assassinate the king². In the confusion that followed, the Persians conquered Armenia, and slew the greater part of the royal family. One young prince, Tiridates, was rescued from the slaughter, and conveyed to Rome, where he received an education suited to his royal birth. Aided by St. Gregory³, called the Illuminator, because Christianity was established in Armenia chiefly by his exertions, Tiridates recovered his paternal throne, and after some hesitation became the first Christian king. Narsi invaded Armenia; the Roman emperor, Galerius, hastened to the aid of his ally, but was defeated with immense loss, and the Persians became masters of the greater part of the dominions of Tiridates. Galerius renewed the war, and changed its fortune; by a sudden irruption on a

¹ Mirkhond.

² Chamich's History of Armenia. It has been translated from the original Armenian, by J. Avdall, a merchant of that nation, resident in Calcutta, and deserves to be better known in this country.

³ St. Gregory was the son of the assassin Anak, and seems to have been actuated by a desire of atoning for his father's guilt.

side where no attack was anticipated, he completely routed the Persian forces, and took the family of Narsi captive. The royal prisoners were treated with great humanity; and his enemies were loudest in praising the generosity of the conqueror. Narsi was forced to beg a peace, which was dearly purchased by the sacrifice of Mesopotamia to the Romans, and of the province of Ahopatene' (now Azerbeja'n) to the Armenians. Tiridates removed his seat of government to Tauris (the modern Tabriz) in his new province, probably because he found it necessary to keep a perpetual guard on his frontiers.

Nothing remarkable occurred in the reign of Hoormuz, the next sovereign; he ruled Persia for seven years and five months. He died without a son to inherit his dominions (A.D. 310); and the kingdom was about to fall into confusion, when it was discovered that one of the ladies in the harem was pregnant, and the Mobeds, by a lucky guess, declared that the child would be a boy. After a strange ceremony of coronation had been performed, the unborn infant was proclaimed king, and he became one of the most powerful monarchs that Persia had hitherto seen, and one of the most formidable enemies of the Roman name.

The history of the Sassanides shows the dangers by which the Roman power in the East was threatened; it is evident that the enterprises of such a dynasty could only be checked by the incessant vigilance of the emperor, and had Constantine made Rome his residence he would virtually have abandoned to his rivals the provinces of Asia.

CHAPTER III.

Political System established by Constantine.

THERE is scarcely a city in the world so advantageously situated as that chosen by Constantine to be the capital of

his dominions. Built on the triangular tongue of land that faces the entrance of the Thracian Bosphorus, it was a mart for the commerce of the Euxine and the Mediterranean seas ; the noble bay, called, from its beauty and shape, the Golden Horn, at once protected it on the north, and afforded an excellent harbour ; the south was washed by the Propontis, which equally yielded protection, facilitated commerce, and supplied abundance of fish ; a low range of hills made the western or land side easy of defence against the barbarous and plundering tribes of Thrace. Such a situation was not likely to be neglected by the enterprising commercial states of Greece ; so early as the seventh century before the Christian era, a city was founded on this favoured spot by Byzas, a native of Megara, who led thither a colony of his countrymen, and called the new city Byzantium, after his own name.

As the colonial policy of the Greeks was very ill defined, we must not be surprised at finding that Byzantium soon threw off its allegiance to Megara, and asserted its independence. When Darius Hystaspes, after conquering Asia Minor, asserted the supremacy of Persia over Thrace and Macedon, the Byzantines almost alone made an attempt to stem the torrent of invasion ; they were defeated, and Byzantium was razed to the ground by the savage conquerors. The city lay in ruins until the Persians were driven from Europe after the battle of Plataea, when it was rebuilt by Pausanias. Thenceforward Byzantium went on progressively advancing in commercial prosperity. Though forced to yield obedience to the Macedonians and the Romans, the Byzantines were allowed the privilege of domestic government ; commerce, unfettered by any impolitic restrictions, daily increased, and the city, in the first century of the Christian era, already was regarded as " the Rome of the East." Its prosperity received a rude shock in the contest for empire between Niger and Severus. The Byzantines embraced the cause of the former, and

supported it with a desperate fidelity to which there are few parallels. For three years the city maintained itself against a fearful disparity of force both by land and sea ; its lofty walls, so compact that they seemed to be formed of one undivided mass, bade defiance to the besiegers, while galleys issuing from its well-defended harbours, swept the narrow seas, harassed the enemy's rear, and cut off his communications. Famine at length broke the spirit of the gallant citizens ; it was long borne with incredible fortitude, but when all hopes of relief proved visionary, they were forced to surrender at discretion. Severus ordered the magnificent walls to be destroyed, a work of so much difficulty, that, Herodian, who saw their remains in the beginning of the third century, declares it difficult to determine which most deserved admiration, those by whom such stupendous structures were erected, or those by whom they were broken down. The conqueror ordered all the soldiers and citizens of distinction to be slain, the city to be destroyed, and its territories given to its neighbours. But the patient and submissive conduct of the Byzantines induced Severus to relent, he even repaired some of the public edifices, but he placed the city under the subjection of its commercial rival Perinthus. It was during his war with Licinius, who had shut himself up in Byzantium, that Constantine was struck with the advantageous position of the city, and as the circumstances of the empire rendered a change of its metropolis absolutely necessary, there is no reason to qualify our admiration of the wisdom of his selection.

Having made his choice Constantine urged forward with extraordinary speed the completion of the public works necessary in the new city. It was solemnly dedicated on the 11th of May, A.D. 334, and received the name of the Second Rome: but it was then and now better known by the appellation of Constantinople. The establishment of Christianity as the religion of the state was consum-

mated by this removal of the seat of government; Constantine found the Church already provided with a system of ecclesiastical discipline well adapted to harmonize with the civil institutions of the empire; he wisely resolved on making the hierarchy one of the principal supports of his throne, and established his own authority over the priesthood by presiding at the Council of Nice (A.D. 325), where sentence of condemnation was pronounced against Arius and his followers. In concert with the bishops assembled in this first œcumenical council, he determined what should be considered as the orthodox faith, and unfortunately affixed penalties to dissent, which prepared the way for a new system of persecution. But though the emperor maintained his own supremacy in the council, he made many imprudent concessions to ecclesiastical authority, that prepared the way for the future usurpations of ambitious prelates. He freed the clergy from civil responsibilities and placed them wholly under the control of their respective diocesans; the jurisdictions of the several prelates were accurately determined, and their precedency regulated with as much strictness as that of temporal princes. The decided part which Constantine took, rendered him the chief of a sect rather than the master of an empire; he became every day less tolerant; exile was denounced against all the bishops who refused to subscribe to the creed promulgated by the Council of Nice, the heathen temples were ordered to be closed or destroyed; sacrifices were strictly prohibited; and at length the philosopher Sopater, who had with more boldness than discretion supported the declining cause of Paganism, was beheaded. Sopater was the first victim of sacerdotal intolerance; but this was not the only proof of the Church having declined from its original purity; the ambition and the avarice of the lordly prelates became as conspicuous as the humility and devotedness of their predecessors. A single anecdote will show how rapid was

the progress of corruption. When Alexander, bishop of Constantinople, was dying, his clergy came to consult him on the choice of a successor: "If," said he, "you wish to choose the most virtuous bishop, elect Paul: if you desire the services of the most active and able courtier, let your choice fall upon Macedonius." History tells us plainly enough, which of the candidates was nominated to the see. When a bishop, on the bed of death, so far mistook his mission, and forgot his duties, as to give such sacrilegious counsel, it is evident that the thirst for temporal power must have been more deeply fixed in his mind than the convictions of faith. Pretensions supported with such fatal and invariable constancy, were necessarily destined to triumph, and virtue could no longer find an asylum, in hearts devoured by culpable ambition.

It was after the council of Nice had terminated its labours, that Constantine put to death his son Crispus, and his wife Fausta. The remorse which he felt for these crimes, aggravated by the popular indignation, hastened his departure from Rome, which he swore never to revisit. Perhaps, this last expiring burst of liberty confirmed his hostility to the forms of the republic, for he went into the very extreme of oriental despotism, establishing, with the single exception of polygamy, all the forms of an eastern court. Dignities and honours were rendered personal, and dependent upon the will of the sovereign. There were three grades of rank, the Illustrious, the Eminent (*Spectabiles*) and the Honourable (*Clarissimi*). The title of Illustrious was confined to the Consuls and Patricians, the Prætorian Prefects, the Masters-general of cavalry and infantry, and the ministers of state. In the second class were included the Pro-consuls, the Vicars or vice-prefects, and the military Dukes and Counts, who acted as lieutenants-general in the Roman army. The Honourable class contained the senators, and the inferior officers, both civil and military.

The titles of consul and patrician were merely honorary: every year two consuls were chosen by the emperor, installed with expensive ceremonies, and then permitted to retire into private life. The patricians were simply the courtiers permitted to visit at the palace, and they held this title, which was no longer hereditary, during the emperor's good pleasure. Prætorian prefects were the governors of the four great præfectures, the East, Illyricum, Italy, and the Gallic territories, into which the empire was divided; the governors of Rome and Constantinople were allowed the same rank as governors of præfectures. Each præfecture was divided into dioceses, ruled by proconsuls and vicars, and the dioceses again were subdivided into provinces. The civil was separated from the military authority; under the masters-general, who regulated the army throughout the empire, were the dukes (*duces*), who acted as generals in the provinces, and counts (*comites*), whose rank entitled them to be companions to the emperor. Before this period, the governor of a Roman province united in himself the civil, ecclesiastical and military authority; but from henceforth all affairs in which religion was concerned, came under the cognizance of the bishop; and the duke directed the army without consulting the pleasure of the præfect. By this division of power, the imperial authority was less exposed to rivalry, but the efficiency of the provincial government was seriously impaired.

The new officers of the state and court were—the grand chamberlain (*Præpositus sacri cubiculi*), under whom were the counts of the palace (*comites palatii*), and inferior chamberlains (*cubicularii*), in four divisions; the minister of finance (*comes sacrarum largitionum*); the quæstor, who performed the functions both of minister of justice and principal secretary-of-state; the keeper of the privy purse (*comes rei principis*); and the two commanders of the household (*comites domesticorum*), each of whom had a corps of body-guards (*schola*) under his command. The

number of state officers was continually increasing; and if the good of a commonwealth consisted in forms, ranks, and titles, the Roman empire would have enjoyed unvalled prosperity.

These changes led to a great increase in taxation, although Constantine greatly reduced the army, and employed barbarians at a less rate of pay than would have satisfied the legionaries. The principal sources of revenue were the indiction, the excise (*aurum lustrale*), and the benevolence (*aurum donativum vel coronarium*).

The Indiction was a land-tax, which though not originally devised by Constantine, was regulated and permanently established in his reign. It was regulated according to an exact register or public valuation of all the estates in the empire, and was levied like a capitation tax on all persons of property. The amount to be raised was annually proclaimed by the emperor (*indicebatur*), and hence the tax received its name. The register of property was revised every fifteen years, and a fresh valuation made; hence arose the use of the *cycle of indictions*, a term of fifteen years, which began to be used as a common era, from the 1st of September, A.D. 312.

The Excise was a tax levied upon almost every species of trade; it was collected every four years, whence it was named the *lustral* tax. The Benevolence had been originally a voluntary contribution, that arose from the custom of the cities and provinces presenting the emperors with golden crowns on particular occasions, whence it was called the coronal tax (*aurum coronarium*): the value of these crowns began to be paid in money before the age of Constantine, but he was the first who made this a regular tax, and required it to be paid by every considerable city.

The transfer of the seat of government from the banks of the Tiber, to the shores of the Bosphorus, was rendered unavoidable by the circumstances of the empire; and it certainly delayed the final overthrow of the Roman power,

though it confirmed the iron despotism of the court. But those who regard this as one of the causes of the empire's decline, should remember, that for an empire fallen so low as the Roman, despotism was almost the only support that remained. Still we cannot avoid contrasting the old with the new capital. There were—new citizens, a new senate, a new and better religion, a more genial climate; but there were no memorials of fame, no epochs of splendid deeds, in a word, no glory. There was however, much in the change to gratify both the ambition and the fanaticism of the emperor. His senators were courtiers; his prelates felt that to him they owed the supremacy of their creed; his subjects were vassals who knew not the name of freedom; they could not look back upon ages of power and liberty, they could only look forward to a futurity of ignominy and servitude. We must however remember, that the empire thus founded at Byzantium, resisted for a thousand years the combined action of destructive agents, that would have singly ruined any other government of which we have either heard or read, in less than half a century. The problem to be solved in the history of most dynasties is "why they fell?" but the Byzantine alone perplexes us with the inquiry, "why it did not fall;" a difficulty of which it is not by any means easy to discover a satisfactory solution. "The impregnable situation of its capital," says Heeren, "which usually decides the fate of such kingdoms, joined to its despotism, established in harmonious completeness by Constantine, serves in some measure to explain a phenomenon unparalleled in the history of the world."

CHAPTER IV.

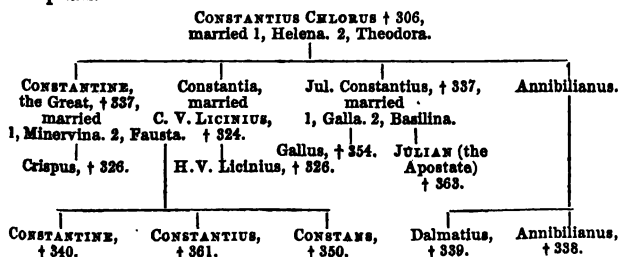
The History of the Empire under the Flavian Family.

(From A.D. 323. to A.D. 363.)

THE Flavian family was first raised to distinction by Claudius, who became emperor after the death of Galienus (A.D. 268). Flattering genealogists traced back its origin to the royal house of Priam; but sober inquiries only shew that Claudius was born of humble parentage, in some province bordering on the Danube; that he owed his elevation to his own merits, and that he made his relatives participate in his success. Constantius Chlorus, the grandson of Chrispus, elder brother of Claudius, was the second of his family that ascended the throne; at his death he bequeathed his claims to his son Constantine the Great, who became master of the Roman world after the overthrow of his brother-in-law Licinius¹.

While Constantine was engaged in ornamenting his new capital, a war arose on the frontiers of his empire, which would probably have produced very dangerous results, but for the watchful attention which the emperor's vicinity to the field of action enabled him to maintain. The Sarmatians, a fierce race of warriors, possessed the country

* The following genealogical table of the family of Constantine will be found useful in the course of this history. The number following † tells the year in which each died; the names of emperors are printed in capitals.



now inhabited by the Cossack, and, like them, united the manner of Tartar tribes with the complexion and figure of Europeans. Devoted to pasture, they moved their families from place to place in covered waggons ; and as they lived in large hordes, their camps resembled moveable cities. They were all horsemen. Their armour was composed of animals' hoofs cut into thin slices, laid lapping over each other like fish-scales, and strongly sewed on a vestment of canvas. From want of iron they tipped their weapons with fish-bones, and used a strong poison that rendered every wound they inflicted fatal. The Vandals, driven onward by the Goths, sought refuge among the Sarmatians, and were not only hospitably received, but were even permitted to give a king to the nation. This strange event at once alarmed and exasperated the Goths. They fiercely attacked the Sarmatians, and triumphed over them in several sanguinary engagements. Constantine saw the increasing power of the Goths with just alarm. An anxiety to watch its growth, and to check the progress of the Persians, was, as we have said, one cause of his fixing the imperial residence at Byzantium. He therefore readily entered into alliance with the Sarmatians, and began to assemble an army on the northern frontiers. Alaric, the Gothic monarch, resolved to anticipate the attack of the legions. He invaded Mœsia, and had the satisfaction to see the Roman army fly before an inconsiderable detachment of his barbarians. But the emperor soon retrieved this transitory disgrace ; in a second engagement (April 20th, A.D. 332), the Goths were totally routed ; nearly one hundred thousand fell on the field, and the remnant was only saved by supplicating peace, and giving the son of their king as a hostage. Far from being grateful for this deliverance, the Sarmatians were exasperated at not being paid for the defence of their own lands, and began to make hostile inroads into the Roman territories. Constantine therefore abandoned them to their former enemies, and the Goths in

one decisive engagement swept away the flower of the Sarmatian youth. The vanquished resorted to the desperate expedient of arming their slaves, and they, as might have been expected, after having repulsed the Goths, claimed and seized supremacy over their former masters. Unable to bear such a disgraceful yoke, the Sarmatians quitted their country in large hordes. Some submitted to the Goths ; others were permitted to unite with the Germanic tribes ; but far the greater portion sought and obtained permission to colonize the waste lands in Pannonia, Thrace, and Macedon.

The internal administration of the empire during the later years of Constantine's life was entrusted to unworthy favourites, who deceived their master and tyrannized over his subjects. How far the emperor sanctioned the profligacy which notoriously prevailed in the court of Constantinople, cannot be easily ascertained ; but he certainly gave in himself an example both of avarice and prodigality, very inconsistent with his former heroic career, and with the character of a Christian sovereign. The provincial governments were chiefly entrusted to members of the royal family. The emperor's three sons, Constantine, Constantius, and Constans, together with his nephew, Dalmatius, had the rank of Cæsars ; while another nephew, Annibilianus, was greeted with the unusual title of king. All these princes had been educated with the most anxious care ; but the herd of flatterers that surrounded the court neutralized the efforts of their instructors, and the emperor himself committed the fatal error of investing them with power at an early age, and sending them to learn the art of government at the expense of the provinces entrusted to their charge. These evils were not very severely felt while peace continued ; but towards the close of the emperor's reign, the Persians, who had remained quiet during the minority of Shâh-poor, began to threaten the Asiatic pro-

vinces, deeming that their young sovereign was worthy to inherit the throne of Cyrus.

We have already mentioned the singular circumstances attending the coronation of the unborn Sháh-poor. During his minority, the Mobeds, or priests who governed the kingdom in his name, circulated many anecdotes of his precocious wisdom, which are still preserved by oriental historians. Whether true or false, they had a beneficial effect in attaching the affections of the Persians to their young monarch and preventing any attempt to set him aside during his childhood. His first campaign was against the Arabs, who had taken advantage of his minority to ravage the western provinces of Persia. Sháh-poor completely triumphed over these marauders, and exacted a terrible vengeance for the excesses they had committed. He ordered the shoulders of his captives to be pierced, and then dislocated by a strong cord passed through them; whence he is usually called, by oriental writers, Dhoolaktaff, that is, Lord of the Shoulders. Having secured the tranquillity of his dominions on the Arabian side, Sháh-poor began to make preparations for attacking the Romans; and Constantine, aware of the danger, was taking energetic measures of defence, when he was seized at Nicomedia with a disease, which his physicians pronounced to be fatal.

The emperor prepared to meet death with fortitude. He received the sacrament of baptism from the hands of the bishop of Nicomedia, confirmed by his will the distribution of the empire between his sons and nephews, bequeathed some revenues to the cities of Rome and Constantinople, and expired (May 22, A.D. 337), in the sixty-fourth year of his reign. Few historical characters have been the subject of such fierce controversy as Constantine; extolled by many Christian writers as a saint, he is described by the advocates of paganism as the worst of tyrants. Truth in this as in most instances, lies between the opposing state-

ments. Constantine became corrupted by success, and spent the later years of his reign in effeminate luxury, while his subjects were oppressed by unworthy ministers ; but the universal grief that his death diffused through the empire, fully proves that he was not another Nero or Caligula.

All the emperor's sons were absent when he died, but Constantius arrived in sufficient time to superintend the funeral. The body was brought in great state to Constantinople, and the obsequies performed with unusual splendour ; but the tomb had scarce closed over the emperor's remains, when intrigues were commenced for setting aside all his arrangements. A declaration was obtained from the soldiers, that they would permit no one but the sons of their lamented monarch to rule over the Roman empire. Justly alarmed, the other branches of the Flavian family applied to Constantius for a pledge of safety, and he readily swore to grant them protection. But in a few days he received publicly a forged scroll from the bishop of Nicomedia, purporting to be the will of the late emperor, in which Constantine was made to declare that he had been poisoned by his brethren, and to call upon his sons to avenge his murder. When this fatal document was read to the soldiers, they clamoured loudly for vengeance, and Constantius, after some affected hesitation, yielded to their wishes. Two of the late emperor's brothers, seven of his nephews, including Dalmatius and Annibilianus, Optatus, who had married Constantine's sister, and the præfect Ablavius, whose wealth seemed to render him dangerous, were massacred almost without the form of a trial. If any thing could aggravate such horrors, it might be added, that Constantius had married the daughter of one of his victims, Julius, and that his sister was united to another, Annibilianus. So promiscuous was the slaughter, that Gallus and Julian, the youngest sons of Julius Constantius, were

with difficulty rescued from the daggers of the assassins, and conveyed to a place of safety, until their rage had subsided.

Soon after this tragedy, the three imperial brothers met to share the empire. Constantine, the eldest brother, obtained the capital, with a nominal supremacy; the eastern provinces were assigned to Constantius, and the western to Constans.

Scarcely had this arrangement been completed, when Constantius was forced to take the field, in order to check the progress of the ambitious Sháh-poor, who at the same moment threatened to destroy the Christian kingdom of Armenia, and to drive the Romans from Syria. A large body of the Armenian nobles had been opposed to the moral reforms introduced with Christianity by Tiridates; but their discontent was restrained by the vigorous administration of that monarch. On his death they summoned to their aid the savage tribes from the Albanian mountains, expelled the lawful heir, murdered or exiled the Christian priests, and placed themselves under the protection of the king of Persia. A Roman army was sent to the aid of the Christians, the rebels were overthrown, and the kingdom of his ancestors restored to Chosroes, the son of Tiridates; but he proved ungrateful to his benefactors, and became the voluntary vassal of Sháh-poor.

The Roman interests were better maintained on the Syrian frontier, where Constantius displayed great military skill, and some share of political wisdom. It would be tedious to mention all the battles fought in the course of this sanguinary but indecisive war. In most of the engagements the Romans were worsted; but these defeats were owing more to the insubordination of the legions, than to the valour of their enemies. At the battle of Singara (A.D. 348), the Romans, by an impetuous charge, broke the Persian centre, penetrated to the camp, stormed

its ramparts ; but then, seduced by the tempting spoils, they broke their lines, and began to plunder. Night came upon them, exhausted by toil, and dispersed through the tents. Sháh-poor had in the meantime rallied his wings, which had scarcely been engaged, and at midnight led them down against his incautious foes. Surprised, half-armed, and dispersed, the Romans made but a feeble resistance ; immense numbers were slaughtered, and Constantius with difficulty led a miserable remnant back to a place of safety. The Persian king immediately laid siege to Nisibis ; but the inhabitants, animated by their bishop, made such a vigorous resistance that he was forced to retire. He renewed the siege on two subsequent occasions, but was unable to wrest this important fortress from the Romans.

But while Constantius was thus engaged in Asia, a civil war broke out between his brothers, which terminated in the death of Constantine, and the usurpation of his dominions by Constans. Constantius would have forgiven the crime, had he been allowed a share of the spoil ; but Constans refused him any portion of his new acquisitions, and for ten years kept possession of two-thirds of the empire. The government of the fratricide was marked equally by cruelty and weakness. At length Magnentius, an ambitious soldier, raised the standard of revolt in Gaul. Constans, forsaken by all his followers, attempted to fly, but was overtaken by some light cavalry, and slain at a small town near the foot of the Pyrenees. Gaul and Italy submitted to Magnentius ; but the legions of Illyricum proclaimed their general, Vetricius, emperor, and the princess Constantina placed the crown on his head with her own hands (A.D. 350).

The news of these events recalled Constantius to Europe. On his arrival at Heraclea, in Thrace, he received ambassadors from the two usurpers, offering favourable terms of peace. The son of Constantine had early learned dissimulation. He demanded a night for reflection, and on the fol-

lowing morning declared that his father's spirit had appeared to him in a dream, and forbidden him to hold any communication with the murderer Magnentius ; but he offered to make Vetrano his colleague in the empire. The Illyrian general, a brave soldier, but a poor politician, readily assented ; but in a short time he found that his legions had been won over by Constantius, and he was forced to resign all his authority. He retired contentedly into a private station, and through the remainder of his life shewed no regret for the high dignity of which he had been deprived.

Constantius met a more formidable enemy in Magnentius. The rival armies met in Lower Pannonia, and the forces of the usurper were victorious in several skirmishes. At length a decisive battle was fought under the walls of Mursa on the Drave. It was one of the most sanguinary engagements recorded in history ; victory was decided by the charge of the mail-clad cuirassiers in the army of Constantius, who forced a way through the half-naked legions of Gauls and Germans, while the second line of light cavalry, dashing into the chasms, cut down the disordered soldiers almost without resistance. The slain amounted to fifty-four thousand ; and as the troops engaged on both sides were the best in the empire, the loss was irreparable. In fact, we may safely say, that the barbarians owed most of their subsequent successes to the destruction of the veterans on the fatal field of Mursa. (A.D. 351.)

Magnentius fled to Italy ; but his previous cruelties had alienated the affections of the Italians, and no sooner had Constantius appeared on the opposite coast of Dalmatia, than most of the cities revolted in his favour. The usurper was forced to fly, but his cruelty was gratified by a useless victory over a body of his incautious pursuers. He sought refuge in Gaul, but the spirit of insurrection spread thither ; and Magnentius, learning that he was about to be betrayed by his own soldiers, committed

suicide. The remaining provinces submitted without a struggle, and thus the whole Roman empire was once more united under a single ruler.

While Constantius was thus engaged in the west, he entrusted the administration of the eastern provinces to his cousin Gallus, who had married the princess Constantina. Gallus fixed his residence at Antioch, where his violent excesses disgusted his subjects, while his ambitious and wicked wife continually urged him to the most dangerous attempts. Stimulated by her, he put to death, with circumstances of great indignity, the præfect and quæstor that had been sent him by Constantius, and then instead of preparing for war, allowed himself to be deceived by the delusive tranquillity of the emperor. Constantius craftily withdrew the veteran legions from Asia one after another; and when Gallus was thus rendered helpless, requested him to come to the imperial court, which was then held at Milan. Under certain circumstances, an invitation is a command, and Gallus very reluctantly commenced his journey. Constantina, who had instigated him to the commission of so many crimes, died upon the road, and he was left alone to bear their consequences. At first, he was treated with the respect due to his rank; but when he reached the province of Pannonia, he was arrested as a common felon, hurried to a remote prison, and after a mock trial, beheaded by the common executioner. Julian would have been involved in the fate of his brother Gallus, had not the empress Eusebia interceded for his life. He was permitted to retire to Athens, where he devoted himself to the study of what was then called philosophy. Dazzled by the subtle speculations of the sophists, he secretly abandoned Christianity, and waited for a convenient opportunity to make an open profession of Paganism. He was recalled after some time to court, by the exertions of his patroness, solemnly installed as Cæsar, and entrusted with

the government of the Gallic provinces, which were grievously devastated by the Germans.

Before leaving Italy, Constantius resolved to visit the ancient capital of the empire, and the Romans prepared to hail the now unusual visit of an emperor with the utmost enthusiasm. The entire line of march resembled a triumphal procession. Thirty-two years had elapsed since the "eternal city" had seen its sovereign; the joy with which he was received was boundless, and Constantius declared that it seemed as if the whole human race had been assembled to bid him welcome. (A.D. 357.) After having remained thirty days in Rome, Constantius was summoned to defend the Illyrian provinces, which had been exposed to the incursions of the barbarians ever since the destruction of the veterans at the fatal battle of Mursa. He quitted Rome with regret, and showed his gratitude to the citizens by sending them the splendid Egyptian obelisk with which his father had designed to ornament Byzantium.

The presence of the emperor soon restored the tranquility of the Illyrian provinces. He conquered the barbarians, and following them beyond the Danube, so completely humbled them, that years elapsed before they were again able to renew their incursions. But danger began to threaten another quarter of the empire. While Constantius had been engaged in western wars, Sháh-poor had been prevented from taking advantage of his absence, by the invasion of some of the fierce tribes dwelling beyond the Oxus, who have in every age been the most formidable enemies of Persia. When these were subdued, the Persians once more resolved to drive the Romans from Asia, and entering Mesopotamia, made several important conquests. The generals sent to oppose them owed their elevation only to court intrigues. They spent their time in luxurious idleness; and had not the Persians wasted their time and exhausted their strength in besieging Amida, the empire

of the east would have been brought to the brink of ruin. At length Constantius was induced to make a campaign in person; but he too undertook a siege, which wasted his army, and the approach of the rainy season compelled him to retire ingloriously into winter quarters.

Far different was the success of Julian in Gaul; though thwarted by the emperor's creatures, he drove the Allemans and Franks from Gaul, and even pursued the barbarians beyond the Rhine. But the merits of his civil administration were even greater than his military exploits. He diligently superintended the administration of justice, encouraged commerce, and rebuilt many of the cities that had been destroyed in the recent wars.

The disorders in the church, after the death of Constantine, rivalled the disorders of the empire. Constantius favoured the Arian heresy, while both his brothers proclaimed themselves defenders of the orthodox creed, and restored Athanasius to the bishopric of Alexandria, from which he had been exiled by their father. A council, held at Rome by pope Julius, sanctioned the Athanasian doctrines, and condemned the creed of Arius: the partisans of that heresiarch assembled another council at Antioch, deposed Athanasius, and appointed one of their own party, named Gregory, his successor. Gregory hastened to take possession of his see, escorted by a large body of troops, under the command of Philagrius, præfect of Egypt. The Arian prelate took forcible possession of the see, and Athanasius was driven into exile. He sought and found refuge with his brethren of the western church. Constans wrote to his brother, demanding that the ejected bishop should be restored; whilst a council of the orthodox prelates was convoked at Sardica, to resist all innovations in the Christian creed. A rival council was assembled by the Arians, and mutual censures and excommunications were interchanged. But the death of Constans deprived Athanasius of his most efficient protector. Constantius, partly by bribes and partly

by intimidation, obtained a decree from the council of Milan, sanctioning the deposition of the orthodox bishop, and confirming the appointment of Gregory. An army was necessary to give effect to the decree, for the Alexandrians, fondly attached to Athanasius, had resolved to resist the intruder that the emperor had chosen for his successor. George of Cappadocia, who had been elected bishop of Alexandria by the venal council, felt no scruple in using the most violent means to obtain possession of his see. Soldiers were introduced into the city by night; the cathedral was stormed while the congregation was engaged in public worship; a terrible massacre of the faithful ensued, from which Athanasius escaped with great difficulty. Nor did the evil terminate here; for several days the wretched Alexandrians were forced to endure all the outrages that rapine, lust, and cruelty could suggest to the licentious legions: and similar scenes were enacted in all the episcopal cities of Egypt. Athanasius fled to the desert, where he was protected by the monks. He was not the only victim to the Arian persecution; many orthodox bishops in various parts of the empire were in like manner driven into exile, and religious controversy deluged the streets of Rome and Constantinople with blood.

While Constantius displayed activity only in persecuting the orthodox, and supporting the Arians, Julian was employed in subduing the enemies of the empire, and restoring the prosperity of the Gallic provinces. The emperor soon began to envy and dread his enterprising cousin. Means were sought to weaken his fame and abridge his power, for Julian cautiously avoided giving his detractors any pretext for open violence. He was ordered to send four of his best legions to assist in defending the eastern frontiers from the Persians, and complied with apparent readiness; but the soldiers refused to march, and proclaimed Julian emperor. After some affected delay, he accepted the title; at the same time he announced his apostacy, declaring that he

committed his safety "to the care of the Immortal Gods." Preparations for a civil war were speedily made, but the seasonable death of Constantius averted its calamities. Julian entered Constantinople, where he was received with the utmost enthusiasm. He honoured the remains of Constantius with a magnificent funeral, and then began to apply himself diligently to the reform of the administration.

Much has been said and written on the character of Julian; his apostacy from the Christian religion exposing him to unmerited censure from ecclesiastical writers, and procuring him extravagant eulogies from the opponents of the faith. Truth has been sacrificed by the exaggeration of his errors on the one hand, and his merits on the other. He was doubtlessly a philosophic pedant, but he was still an able statesman: many of the reforms he introduced into the court and the government merit high praise; but many also of his changes accorded better with the maxims of the schools, than the circumstances of the empire. He discarded all the luxuries, and also some of the decencies of life; in short, he desired to behave as a stoic, rather than an emperor. In punishing those ministers of Constantius to whom he attributed the recent calamities of the empire, sufficient care was not taken to distinguish the innocent from the guilty; and in consenting to the execution of the treasurer Ursulus, the new emperor was as unjust as he was ungrateful.

But the darkest stain on the character of Julian is his fanatical hatred of Christianity. The circumstances of the time did not permit the revival of persecutions; in words, the emperor was forced to grant universal toleration; but the chief offices of state and the dignities of the empire were conferred only on those who had adhered to the ancient religion, or who seemed likely to imitate the apostacy of the emperor. A still more flagrant act was the edict which prohibited Christians from teaching the liberal arts. By transferring the important business of education to the

pagan sophists, Julian hoped to lead the rising generation into a belief that literature was intimately connected with idolatry, and thus to engage their pride and their prejudice in support of his new system.

A more honourable, but a more difficult task, was the reformation of idolatry itself. He found it no very difficult matter to explain away all the absurdities of the heathen theogony, by describing those monstrous fictions as mysterious allegories; but he found it impossible to engage the pagan priests in an effort to rival the moral purity of the lives of the early Christians; a purity which revived in the church, whenever Christianity was exposed to difficulties and dangers, but which too frequently faded away in the sunshine of prosperity.

The emperor's attention was diverted from these innovations by the necessity of providing for the Persian war. Before marching against Sháh-poor, however, he gave a singular proof at once of his hatred to Christianity, and his dread of the convincing evidence that attests its truth. The condition of the Jews, like the flaming bush that appeared to their own legislator on Mount Horeb, burning without being consumed, has ever attracted the attention of every reflecting mind, and has been justly appealed to as a standing miracle by the advocates of Christianity, who found in the Holy Scriptures this singular condition predicted with perfect accuracy. Julian resolved to destroy the force of this argument. He issued, from the imperial residence at Antioch, an edict for the restoration of the temple at Jerusalem; and the Jews throughout his wide dominions hastened to execute a work which promised to restore their name and nation. But this plan, though devised by a powerful emperor, and adopted by an enthusiastic people, signally failed; whether by direct miracle, as even heathen writers have confessed, or by the ordinary course of Providence, in which the actions of men are made unconsciously to work out the

designs of God, it is not necessary to determine ; in either case, the emperor's failure is a singular attestation of the truth of prophecy.

Having made all necessary preparations for the Persian war, Julian departed from Antioch, to the great joy of its inhabitants, whose zealous attachment to Christianity had provoked the emperor's displeasure, and induced him to write a satire against them, while they in turn assailed him with epigrams and lampoons. The same feelings had induced the emperor to insult the Christian king of Armenia, and he thus lost an ally at the very moment when his aid was most required. Sháh-poor on this occasion adopted the policy which his ancestors had so frequently found effective ; he avoided a decisive battle, but harassed the Romans by incessant skirmishes. Julian's march resembled a continual triumph in outward appearance. He subdued several important cities, defeated his enemies whenever they ventured to make a stand, and advanced almost to the very walls of Ctesiphon. Instead of besieging the imperial city of the Sassanides, he was persuaded by treacherous guides to burn his fleet on the Tigris, and, in imitation of Alexander, to march into the very heart of Persia. His friends, well aware of the unreal nature of the advantages he had obtained, endeavoured to dissuade him from this fatal resolution ; but their remonstrances were in vain, and the Romans crossed the Tigris, after having defeated the Persian army that guarded the line of the river. The country between the Tigris and the Median mountains was celebrated for its fertility, and this probably induced Julian the more readily to quit the wasted plains of Assyria ; but he found that the Persians had burned or destroyed every thing that could be of use to his army. Perfidious guides led him away from the roads that led to his enemy's magazines ; and at length the pressure of famine compelled him to give orders for a retreat. This was the moment which Sháh-poor had so long watched. He led his whole

army against the retiring columns, and wearied the Romans by incessant assaults. Still the legions, fondly attached to their emperor, fought bravely, and repulsed the attacks of their foes; but while they gained victories they lost time, and were kept exposed to famine and a burning sun, enemies against which valour was of no avail. At length, (June 26, A.D. 363), Julian, while leading the van, was informed that his rear had been attacked. He galloped hastily to the place of danger, but had scarcely reached it when he was struck by a dart, and fell from his horse mortally wounded. This fatal event did not put an end to the engagement: the Romans fought with all the fury of rage and despair, maintaining their position until darkness and weariness compelled the Persians to retire.

Julian, in the meantime, was borne fainting to his tent. At the first moment of returning consciousness he wished to return again to the battle; but the effort aggravated his weakness. Being informed that his recovery was hopeless, he prepared to meet the stroke of death with great fortitude and resignation. Having addressed his friends in terms of endearing consolation, and declared his unwillingness to nominate an heir, lest his choice might not be ratified by the army, the emperor died before midnight. Cabals were commenced during the few hours of darkness that remained, and when the council of generals met in the morning, a violent spirit of faction began to agitate the assembly. While they debated, a few voices saluted Jovian, the chief of the domestics, Emperor and Augustus. The imperial guards repeated the acclamation, and the choice was confirmed by the rest of the army.

Thus terminated the dynasty of the Flavian family, which began with the first Christian, and ended with the last Heathen, emperor.

CHAPTER V.

From the extinction of the Flavian Family to the death of Honorius.

(From A.D. 363 to A.D. 423.)

No sooner had Sháh-poor learned the news of Julian's death than he hasted to renew his assault on the retreating army. The Romans fought with great spirit, but Jovian possessed neither the abilities nor the authority of Julian, and when the Persians were repulsed he did not take advantage of his success to expedite his retreat. Proposals for peace were at length made by the Persian king; the conditions were harsh, not to say disgraceful, but Jovian was obliged to accept them, both by the clamours of the soldiers, and the urgent necessity for his presence in the empire. Jovian resigned to the enemy several provinces, Nisibis with other fortresses of scarcely less importance, and the Roman claim to supremacy over the kingdom of Armenia. But notwithstanding the treaty, the Romans suffered very severely during their retreat; for the Persians refused to supply them with provisions, and parties of wandering Arabs hovered round their march, to intercept and plunder all who quitted the main body.

Jovian's first act was to secure the legal establishment of the Christian religion, and this he effected by displaying the standard of the cross at the head of his army, and sending circulars to the provincial governors, professing his attachment to the faith and his desire for its restoration. He also endeavoured to allay the violence of sectarian rancour, which burst forth with fresh fury as soon as the pressure of persecution was removed; but he was himself a strict adherent to the orthodox faith. After some delay at Antioch, where he was principally engaged in regulating ecclesiastical affairs, he set out for Constantinople, but died on his road, in the obscure town of Dadastama, having

reigned only seven months. Some writers attribute his death to poison, but it is more probable that he was suffocated by the gas extracted from the fresh plastered walls of his chamber, by the heat by a charcoal fire*.

After an interregnum of ten days, Valentinian was chosen emperor, chiefly by the exertions of the prefect Sallust, who had refused the throne twice, after the death of Julian and Jovian. The new emperor was imperfectly educated, but he possessed eminent military abilities, great powers of natural eloquence, and inflexible resolution. One of his first proceedings was to divide the eastern and western empires, but in selecting a colleague he was guided by natural affection rather than prudence, for he entrusted the government of the east to his brother Valens, who possessed no qualification for the task, but a devoted attachment to his benefactor.

This division of the empire was rendered necessary by new incursions of the barbarians, who attacked all the frontier provinces nearly at the same moment. Gaul was laid waste by the Germans, Britain was wasted by the Saxons, the Picts and the Scots; the Sarmatians, and Quadi burst into Pannonia, while the Asturians and other Moorish nations ravaged Africa. Of these provinces, Africa was far the most wretched, for Romanus, who had been entrusted with its protection, proved a more cruel scourge than the enemies themselves; he pillaged the unfortunate provincials without mercy, but made no effort to repel the progress of the Asturians. At length, Valentinian commissioned Palladius to investigate the complaints of the Africans; but he was bribed by Romanus to make a false report, and the governor's accusers were severely punished. The wars in which both emperors were soon involved have little connection

* In the low state of chemical knowledge at the period it is no wonder that Jovian was ignorant of his danger. The author knew two young men who were similarly suffocated by sleeping in a newly white-washed room with a fire.

save that of time, and it will, therefore, prevent confusion if we relate the history of Valentinian separate from that of Valens.

Valentinian made Milan his capital, but after remaining there some months he found that the troubled state of Gaul required his presence, and he chose Paris for his residence, a city which was now fast rising into importance. At the same time, Procopius raised the standard of revolt in the eastern empire, (A.D. 365.) but Valentinian was too closely pressed by the Germans to lend any assistance to his brother. At the approach of winter the barbarians retired to their forest, but in the following spring they returned with increased forces, and inflicted a severe defeat upon the Romans. As this calamity was generally attributed to the misconduct of the Batavian legion, the emperor ordered the guilty soldiers to be degraded, stript of their arms, and sold as slaves. Terrified at this tremendous sentence, the troops prostrated themselves before the emperor, implored pardon in the most piteous terms, and besought an opportunity of retrieving their lost honour. Valentinian after some delay yielded to their prayers, and the Batavians were sent under the command of Jovinus to try their fortune once more in the field. Jovinus gained two splendid victories over the barbarians, but his triumph was sullied by the execution of the captive king, which however is said to have been the act of the furious soldiers. A third victory gained by the emperor in person completely humbled the Germans; but Valentinian, instead of pursuing them into their own forests, prudently strengthened his frontiers, and erected a series of fortresses along the Rhine, which preserved the tranquillity of Gaul for nine years.

The coasts of Gaul and Britain were severely harassed by the Saxons, a piratical nation that inhabited the southern part of the Cimbric Chersonese; these hardy sailors, habituated from childhood to encounter the perilous navigation of the northern seas, kept the western coasts of Europe in

constant alarm, for it was impossible to foresee against what point their attack would be directed. Britain was still more severely harassed by the Picts and Scots, who would have driven the Romans from the island, had not Valentinian at this crisis entrusted its administration to Theodosius, afterwards named the Great, an epithet which he merited equally by his valour as a warrior, and his abilities as a statesman. After many severe conflicts, the Scots were driven beyond the Roman wall, a fleet was formed to repel the Saxons, and Britain for a brief space enjoyed tranquillity.

But scarcely had this province been secured, when intelligence arrived of a formidable revolt in Africa, headed by Firmus, a Moorish prince, who seemed disposed to assume the title of emperor. Irritated by the cruelty of Romanus, great numbers of the provincials flocked to the standard of Firmus, and Valentinian hastily recalled Theodosius from Britain to undertake the conduct of this new war. Immediately after his landing Theodosius arrested Romanus; he discovered among his papers evidence of the treachery of Palladius, which he transmitted to the emperor, and the corrupt minister, learning that Valentinian had received clear proof of his guilt, committed suicide to escape punishment. Firmus lost all courage when he learned the name of the general sent against him; he at first attempted to ward off danger by insincere negotiations, but finding that his subterfuges were detected, he began reluctantly to prepare for war. Theodosius meanwhile pushed forward his operations with so much vigour, that Firmus, believing resistance hopeless, secretly abandoned his army, and sought refuge in the mountainous districts of the Isafenses. Having vainly summoned this warlike tribe to deliver up the fugitive, Theodosius invaded their country, where he sullied his laurels by several acts of cruelty. Firmus, fearing that his hosts would betray him to the Romans, strangled himself, and his body was sent to the Roman general.

Valentinian associated his youthful son Gratian with

himself in the empire of the west, in order to avoid the evils that might arise from a disputed succession. Though zealously attached to the orthodox creed, he professed himself the patron of universal toleration, and protected the pagan priests in the possession of their temples. He sanctioned, however, cruel persecutions for the imaginary crime of witchcraft, and strictly prohibited nocturnal sacrifices. He was strict in his administration of the empire, but in his own household he was a cruel tyrant: the slightest offence of any of his domestics was instantly punished with death. He took a savage delight in witnessing the tortures of his victims, and kept two fierce bears, whom he frequently regaled with the limbs of those who had incurred his displeasure. But in the midst of these excesses he retained the military ardour which had been the first cause of his elevation to the throne; and having learned that the Quadi had invaded Illyricum in conjunction with the Sarmatians, he hastened to repel and chastise their inroads. Terrified by the severity with which their ravages were retaliated, the Quadi sent submissively to beg terms of peace. Valentinian replied to the ambassadors with great violence, and worked himself up to such intensity of passion that he burst a blood-vessel, and expired in a few minutes. (A.D. 375.) The empress Justina, who had remained in Italy, persuaded the chiefs of the army to insist that her infant child should share the succession with Gratian; and that prince, prudently dissembling, assented to the arrangement.

During the reign of Valentinian, which on the whole was glorious, the empire of the east was cruelly oppressed by the feeble and treacherous Valens. He had not been long upon the throne, when Procopius, who had married a princess of the Flavian family, and had therefore been forced to fly, in order to escape the jealousy of Jovian, returned in disguise to Constantinople, and took advantage of the emperor's unpopularity to engage the citizens in a

revolt. His success was as great as it was unexpected ; but unable to withstand the corrupting influence of sudden prosperity, he became harsh and tyrannical to his best supporters, many of whom, disgusted by his ingratitude, renewed their allegiance to Valens. Procopius was soon defeated, as he fled from the field of battle, he was murdered by his own domestics, whom Valens punished for their treachery. Marcellus, attempting to renew the revolt, was in a few days made prisoner, and put to death. (A.D. 366.)

The Goths had now for nearly thirty years remained at peace with the Romans, but during this period they had greatly strengthened their power by conquests over the neighbouring Scythian and Sarmatian tribes. Hermanric, the monarch of their united nation, displayed in old age more than the vigour of youth, and carried his arms into the remote and almost unknown countries of the north. The Romans paid no attention to his growing greatness, caring little for wars waged beyond the limits of their own frontiers, never supposed that the increasing power of the Goths would at no distant period menace the safety of their own empire. Fondly attached to the Flavian family, the Goths had resolved to support vigorously the pretensions of Procopius ; but their army did not cross the frontiers until after his fall. As they did not receive timely intelligence of this event, they were easily surrounded by the imperial army, and forced to surrender at discretion. Valens ordered the prisoners to be sold as slaves, and when the Gothic princes sent him threatening remonstrances, resolved to carry the war into their territories. He twice made successful incursions into the dominions of the Goths, and for the first time compelled this haughty nation to sue for peace. Soon after the conclusion of this war, Valens declared himself the patron of the Arian heresy, and began a cruel persecution of the orthodox clergy. The venerable Athanasius, who had so long and so boldly defended the faith of Alexandria, was only saved from a fifth exile by

the love with which his piety and virtues had inspired his flock; he was permitted to end his days in peace, but the church over which he had so fondly watched, became after his death the prey of the spoiler.

Shah-poor was prevented from taking advantage of the gothic wars to invade the Roman empire, by the renewed attacks of the Tartar tribes on the north-eastern provinces of Persia. When they had been with difficulty subdued, he again turned his attention westwards, and attempted to establish his supremacy over the kingdom of Armenia. This unfortunate kingdom, too small to maintain its independence, was alternately subjected to the Romans and Persians, whose respective partisans were engaged in almost incessant civil wars: it was besides distracted by disputes between the spiritual and temporal powers; for the Armenian patriarchs claimed authority independent of their monarchs. The war was long and desultory; but Shah-poor, guided by a renegade chief named Menijan, at length conquered the greater part of the country*. Valens sent an army to the assistance of the Armenians, but he only prolonged the contest, which ended in the complete triumph of the Persians. Shah-poor made a cruel use of his victory. After the capture of Artagers (Artagoressa), "the inhabitants," say the Armenian writers, "were taken into Assyria, and there compelled, by various species of torture, to abjure their faith. Some were picketed on the sharpened pegs of waggons, and thus forced to forsake a religion they venerated, and adopt one they abhorred. Those whose firmness was proof against all the wicked ingenuity of their tormentors, expired under torture The Magi, accompanied by executioners, were distributed among the towns and villages of the kingdom, where they forced the

* It is impossible to reconcile the Armenian and Grecian accounts of this war; the former seem however the preferable authority. See Chamich I. 192-220.

inhabitants to forsake their religion, giving them only the alternative of instant death."

While the foreign policy of Valens was thus weak and contemptible, his domestic administration was bigoted and tyrannical. He put to death several of the most illustrious pagan philosophers; he drove into exile the Christian prelates that rejected the Arian heresy; and he put to death, under frivolous pretences, all whom riches or popularity had rendered suspected. The fall of the Roman empire was inevitable, but its fate was not sealed until the reign of Valens. While he was enjoying the luxuries of the East in Antioch, an embassy from the Goths announced the approach of new and formidable enemies, whose progress it was impossible to resist. These savage hordes were named the Huns; they had been driven by the superior power of rival tribes from their original seats on the northern frontiers of China to the shores of the Caspian sea, where they encountered and subdued the Alans. Thence they extended their territory to the banks of the Tanais, where that river falls into the sea of Azov, (Palus Maotis), and believing, as we are told, the country beyond the Tanais to be an unwholesome marsh, seemed disposed to end their migrations. Accident revealed to some of these barbarians the fertility of the country possessed by their neighbours; they crossed the Tanais in countless multitudes; the aged Hermanric vainly attempted to check their progress: though in the hundred and tenth year of his age, he encountered the enemy in the field, but was defeated and mortally wounded. The Ostrogoths after this calamity despaired of success: they abandoned their country, and sought refuge in the territory of the Visigoths; but the Huns continuing to press onwards, both divisions of the Gothic nation besought permission from Valens to cross the Danube, and colonize the waste lands of Thrace. (A.D. 375.)

Valens after some delay acceded to the request of the

Goths; more than two hundred thousand warriors of that nation crossed the Danube, accompanied by their wives, children, and slaves. It had been stipulated that they should lay down their arms, but the imperial commissioners were bribed to neglect enforcing this condition, and the fugitives retained their weapons. This was not the worst error committed by the ministers of Valens; regardless of the dangers that result from reducing a nation to despair, they withheld provisions from the starving multitude, or sold them at the most exorbitant prices. In the mean time, a division of the Ostrogoths, that had been refused admission into the empire, crossed the Danube on rafts, and advanced through Thrace in hostile array. The imprudence of the imperial governor Lupicinus precipitated a contest; the Goths proclaimed war, and obtained a complete victory over the legions near the city of Marcianopolis. Their ravages were no longer resisted; the sufferings of their brethren and children, who had at different times been enslaved by the Romans, aggravated their fury; Thrace was laid waste by fire and sword. Valens was at length roused to defend the empire. He quitted his luxurious residence at Antioch, summoned to his aid the legions that had been sent to check the progress of the Persians in Armenia, and arrived at Constantinople when its inhabitants were just beginning to despair of safety. The clamours of the ignorant multitude increased the imprudent rashness of Valens; he took the field without waiting for the auxiliary forces of his nephew Gratian, and marched to meet the Goths near Adrianople. His arrangements for battle were made with similar haste and weakness; while his enemies, commanded by the prudent Fritigern, took immediate advantage of all his errors. The event may easily be anticipated; the Roman army was routed with fearful slaughter, and Valens himself was among the slain. (A.D. 378.)

Gratian had been prevented from marching to the relief of the eastern empire by the Allemanni, who had renewed

their incursions into Gaul. He had unjustly put to death the celebrated Theodosius, the defender of Britain and Africa, and had now no general able to supply his place. But, notwithstanding this crime, which probably should be attributed to false accusations and court-intrigues, Gratian was an able and prudent ruler. He punished the governors that oppressed the provinces; he was ever ready to hear the complaints of the distressed, and he hastened to defend his subjects whenever they were exposed to the ravages of the barbarians. Having driven back the Allemanni, he pursued them beyond the Rhine, and forced them to beg a peace. He then marched to the aid of his uncle, and had already reached the confines of Thrace, when he learned the fatal news of the defeat and death of Valens. Gratian thought it prudent to halt at Licinium; but in the meantime the Goths laid siege to Adrianople, while the Sarmatians and Quadi, inspired by their success, entered the Roman territories, and surpassed the Goths themselves in the cruelties they inflicted. St. Jerome describes in fearful colours the calamities suffered by the empire at this period. "During these twenty years, the country between Constantinople and the Julian Alps has been swimming in Roman blood; Scythia, Thrace, Macedon, Dacia, Thessaly, Achaia, Epirus, Dalmatia, and Pannonia are filled with Goths, Sarmatians, Quadi, Alans, Huns, Vandals, &c. whose avarice nothing can escape, whose cruelties have been felt by persons of all ages, sexes, and conditions. How many eminent persons have they enslaved? How many sacred virgins have they treated with brutal violence, and dragged into captivity. Bishops, with their clergy, have been inhumanly massacred; churches have been demolished, the relics of the holy martyrs disinterred, and the altars of God converted into mangers for the steeds of the barbarians."

When the news of these calamities reached Asia, the Roman governors, with cruel precaution, had all the Goths

that served in the garrisons murdered on the same day. They thus averted the immediate danger of revolt, but they increased the hatred with which the Goths regarded the Romans, and supplied them with an excuse for many subsequent excesses.

The dangers to which Gaul was exposed in his absence, pressed heavily on the mind of Gratian; he resolved, after the example of his father, to choose a colleague, who might protect the eastern empire; but, with more wisdom, he disregarded the ties of blood, and selected the younger Theodosius, the son of that hero whose glorious life and unmerited death have been already recorded. Theodosius came from his farm in Spain to the throne of the eastern empire, selected by one who might be regarded as the murderer of his father; but he probably knew the arts by which Gratian had been misled, and the emperor never had cause to regret the honourable confidence he reposed in his colleague.

Theodosius, deservedly named the Great, soon saw that the new authority with which he had been invested was to be maintained by prudence rather than valour. In fact, the eastern empire did not supply the materials of an army; its inhabitants were filled with consternation at the very name of the Goths, and would not dare to face them in the field. Under these circumstances, the emperor fixed his head-quarters at Thessalonica, whence he could easily hold communication with all his lieutenants; he strengthened the fortifications, and increased the garrisons of the cities. Detachments from these secure stations attacked the barbarians whenever a favourable opportunity offered: the Goths, who were constantly forced to send out foraging parties, were attacked and cut off in detail; and each advantage, however slight, was craftily represented as a triumph; and thus the courage of the Romans was raised, while their adversaries were proportionally dispirited. Frigern alone enabled the Visigoths to maintain a formi-

dable aspect; but after his death the army broke into bands of savage robbers, and no longer united against the common enemy. Athanaric, who had remained with some faithful followers beyond the Danube, was at length invited to assume the sovereignty; he obeyed the call, but soon saw that the Gothic power was broken, and resolved to save the remnant of his nation by entering into a treaty with the emperor. Theodosius granted honourable terms of peace. Athanaric did not long survive the treaty; his funeral was celebrated with the utmost pomp by the politic emperor, and this compliment so gratified the simple Goths, that they readily enlisted under the Roman standard, and thus in little more than four years from the death of Valens, the dangers that threatened the utter ruin of the empire were averted without a single battle.

A large body of the Ostrogoths, instead of seeking the protection of the Romans, penetrated into the northern and western nations of Europe, where they recruited their armies from the German and Scythian tribes; after the lapse of some years they returned to the banks of the Danube, so altered that the legions had some difficulty in recognizing their ancient enemies. So formidable did their threatened invasion appear, that Theodosius took the field in person, and gained a complete victory. (A.D. 386.) He took the surviving Goths into his service, and by his judicious treatment acquired their affections. But, though personally attached to Theodosius, these barbarians had not forgotten their hostility to the Romans, and the embers of their slumbering rage were more than once rekindled.

While the emperor of the East was thus consolidating his power, Gratian was gradually losing the affection of his subjects. Fondly attached to hunting and the sports of the field, he took into his pay a body of Alans, who had been accustomed to the chase in their native Scythian deserts. These barbarians soon became his favourite companions, and the Romans saw with indignation their em-

peror assume the dress and arms of a Scythian savage. Encouraged by the unpopularity of Gratian, Maximus the governor of Britain assumed the imperial purple. He landed in Gaul at the head of a powerful army; Gratian deserted by his legions, could only find safety in flight; a treacherous governor betrayed the imperial fugitive, and he fell by the hand of an assassin. (A.D. 383).

The resources of Theodosius were exhausted by the recent Gothic wars, and he was forced to dissemble his resentment for the murder of his benefactor; a treaty was made for partitioning the western empire between Maximus and Valentinian, the former retaining the country beyond the Alps, the latter being secured in the possession of Italy, Illyricum, and Africa. Theodosius and Maximus were both attached to the orthodox creed, and cruelly persecuted the Arians; but these sectarians found protection in Italy, from Justina, the dowager empress. St. Ambrose, archbishop of Milan, preached zealously against the toleration thus afforded to heretics, and excited amongst the orthodox throughout Italy a spirit of disaffection, which hourly increased.

Maximus had from the beginning resolved on obtaining the entire western empire; he embraced the opportunity of making religion a pretext for his ambition, and crossed the Alps with a powerful army of Gauls and Germans. Valentinian and his mother, deserted by all, were forced to seek refuge in the dominions of Theodosius; they embarked in a small vessel at one of the obscure harbours in the Venetian territories, and, after a tedious voyage, safely reached the port of Thessalonica. (A. D. 387.)

Theodosius immediately resolved to support the cause of the exiles: he assembled the legions of the East, took several hordes of barbarian cavalry into his pay, and marched towards the confines of Pannonia, where Maximus, anticipating his approach, had fixed his camp. The issue of the battle that ensued was scarcely for a moment doubtful;

the barbarian cavalry of the East swam their horses over the river Save in sight of the enemy, swept the opposite banks, and, before night closed, secured a safe passage for the rest of the army. When the battle was renewed in the morning, the dispirited legions of Maximus made but a feeble resistance, and, when their leader fled, threw down their arms. Theodosius, without halting, pursued his rival, and pressed on him so hard, that he had scarcely time to shut himself up in Aquileia. But the citizens rose against the usurper ; he was seized, bound, and delivered to Theodosius, who commanded him to be instantly executed. (A. D. 388.)

It is the glory of Theodosius that his virtues expanded with his fortune ; he treated the adherents of Maximus with great clemency, and zealously applied himself to remedy the disorders which the late usurpation had produced in the empire. But, unfortunately, he soon after sullied his fame by issuing orders for a promiscuous massacre of the citizens of Thessalonica, because the rabble of that city had slain its governor in a licentious tumult ; the innocent and the guilty were sacrificed to the emperor's vengeance, and the number of the victims exceeded seven thousand. Ambrose, archbishop of Milan, with true Christian fortitude, denounced this atrocious crime, and refused the emperor admission into the church until he had given some signal proof of his penitence. The emperor accordingly laid aside his royal robes, and, clothed in a mourning garment, publicly besought pardon from God in the church of Milan ; a still more beneficial proof of his sincere repentance was the establishment of a law requiring that there should be, for the future, an interval of thirty days between sentence and execution. Valentinian was again put in possession of the western empire, but he did not long retain it, having been murdered by Arbogastes, one of his generals. The assassin did not venture to assume the imperial purple himself, he gave the

title of emperor to the rhetorician Eugenius, but secretly retained the sovereign power in his own hand. Theodosius was not slow in punishing this new usurpation; he once more marched through Pannonia to Italy, and crossed the Julian Alps. Arbogastes made vigorous preparations for defence, but he was deserted by part of his army, while the rest were confounded by a storm of wind blowing directly in their faces, and he fell in the field of battle. Eugenius was taken prisoner, and suffered the death of a traitor. But the fatigues of war broke down the constitution of Theodosius; he died at Milan, four months after his victory, bequeathing the eastern empire to his elder son Arcadius, and the western to his younger son Honorius. (A. D. 386.)

The feeble princes that succeeded the last emperor, to whom the name of Great can be deservedly applied, were mere puppets in the hands of their ministers. Arcadius was placed under the tutelage of Rufinus, whose cruelty and ambition rendered him generally detested. He resolved to cement his power by uniting his daughter to the young emperor, but during his absence at Antioch some of his rivals placed before Arcadius the portrait of the beautiful Eudoxia, and when Rufinus prepared to celebrate the imperial nuptials with oriental magnificence, he was informed at the last moment, that another lady had been chosen to fill the station he had designed for his daughter. Enraged at the ridicule with which he was covered at this disappointment, the unprincipled minister began to intrigue with the Huns and Goths to invade the empire, and his plots were fast ripening when he was alarmed by intelligence of the approach of the general of the west. Stilicho, the minister or rather the master of Honorius, was a sagacious statesman and intrepid warrior: descended from a Vandal family, he had to encounter all the prejudices with which the haughty Romans regarded barbarians; but his merits triumphed over these, and each step of his military promotion was sanctioned by general applause. Having been appointed

to negotiate a treaty with the king of Persia, he managed the negotiation with so much ability, that Theodosius gave him his niece Serena in marriage. Stilicho was absolute master of the western empire, but not content with this, he resolved to wrest the power of the east from Rufinus, and under the pretence of repelling the Goths led his army into the territory of Arcadius. Rufinus, terrified at the approach of his rival, extorted an edict from the senate of Constantinople, prohibiting the further approach of Stilicho. The prudent general immediately obeyed the command, he returned to Italy, entrusting the army to a Goth, named Gainas. When the soldiers approached Constantinople, Rufinus eagerly hastened to meet them; he was received with apparent respect, but as he rode along the centre, the wings, gradually advancing, hemmed him in, and before he could reflect on the dangers of his position, he was struck dead at the feet of the emperor. (A.D. 395.) His mangled remains were treated with shocking indignities; his wife and daughter only escaped sharing his fate by taking refuge in a sanctuary.

Stilicho derived no advantage from the assassination of his rival. Arcadius resigned himself to a new favourite, and Gainas betrayed the interest of his benefactor for the office of master-general of the eastern empire. The seeds of discord thus sown between the two empires grew rapidly: the subjects of Arcadius and Honorius began to regard each other not merely in a foreign, but a hostile light, and to form alliances with the barbarians that laid waste the territories of their brethren. These sentiments of hostility were greatly increased by the encouragement which the court of Constantinople gave to the revolt of Gildo, the licentious and sanguinary ruler of Africa. This Moorish chieftain affected the style of an independent sovereign, but fearing the firmness of Stilicho, he transferred his nominal allegiance from Honorius to Arcadius. Stilicho promptly prepared to punish the revolt; he sent a small, but veteran army,

into Africa, under the command of Mascezel, the tyrant's injured brother, and the success of the expedition exceeded his most sanguine expectation. In the first engagement, Mascezel struck the arm of one of Gildo's standard-bearers, who dropped the standard from his paralyzed hand. The rest of the army mistook this for an act of submission, which they hastened to imitate, and throwing down their arms dispersed in tumultuous flight. Gildo escaped from the field of battle, but was soon after taken prisoner; to avoid the disgrace of a public execution, he committed suicide. Mascezel returned in triumph to the court of Milan; but he was drowned soon after, whether by accident or design, is uncertain.

The Goths had remained quiet during the reign of Theodosius, but twelve months had not elapsed after his death, when they were again in arms, and more formidable than ever. Hitherto their enterprises had been guided by several chiefs, who yielded but imperfect obedience to the principal leader; now the entire Gothic nation was united under a single head, the formidable Alaric, who was at once a daring soldier and a wily politician. Instead of leading his followers into the provinces exhausted by their former incursions, Alaric marched straight for Greece, passed the mountains without encountering any opposition, and swept the plains not only of Phocis, Attica, and Bœotia, but even of the Peloponnesus. (A. D. 396.) No effort was made to resist the invaders by the degenerate Greeks; no relief was afforded to its subjects by the court of Constantinople; the brave Stilicho, however, undertook the protection of the eastern empire, and having prepared a powerful army and fleet in Italy, sailed to the Isthmus of Corinth. The barbarians were soon besieged in their camp, and would have been forced to surrender, had not the Romans been rendered negligent by success. Alaric took advantage of their supineness; by a rapid march, he gained the point of Rhium, where the narrow entrance of the Corinthian gulf,

now called the straits of Lepanto, is little more than half a mile in breadth ; his soldiers were carried across before Stilicho was aware of their evasion, and Alaric found refuge in the mountains of Epirus. The ministers of Arcadius dreaded Stilicho more than Alaric ; they hastily concluded a treaty with the Gothic monarch, appointing him master-general of Illyricum, and the western leader was compelled to return home to avert a civil war.

A more noble prize soon tempted the ambition of Alaric ; he learned that Italy was almost unguarded, and he determined to invade that peninsula, and plant the Gothic standard on the walls of Rome. The Goths appear to have passed the Julian Alps before the court of Milan had received any intimation of their approach ; the councils of the feeble Honorius advised immediate flight, and the firm resolution of Stilicho alone averted this ruinous measure ; he persuaded the emperor to protract a defensive war, whilst he should himself collect an army in the Rhoetian provinces. Though it was the depth of winter, Stilicho hastened to cross the Alps, and soon collected not only the scattered legions but a numerous band of German auxiliaries. With these forces he hastened back to Italy, but in spite of his speed, he had nearly come too late ; for Honorius, on the approach of Alaric, had hastily abandoned Milan, and shut himself up in the fortress of Asta, where he was closely besieged by the Goths. Disconcerted by the rapidity of Stilicho, Alaric was forced to retire from Asta ; instead of proceeding as a conqueror, he soon found himself surrounded by vigilant enemies, who harassed his march, and cut off his detachments. At length, while the Goths were celebrating the festival of Easter, they were suddenly attacked by the Romans, and routed with fearful slaughter. Alaric led the remnant of his forces into Tuscany, over the Apennines, but being closely pursued by Stilicho, he was overtaken, and again defeated near Verona. (A. D. 404.) These calamities induced him to accept terms of peace ; but the

degraded Romans, instead of being grateful to Stilicho for their deliverance, severely blamed him for not leading their enemy in triumph as a captive.

Scarcely had the Gothic invasion been defeated, when Italy was exposed to new and perhaps greater dangers. A body of Germanic tribes, from the coasts of the Baltic, migrated southwards, marking their progress by ruin and desolation. Under the guidance of their leader Radagaisus they forced a passage over the Alps, and advanced almost without resistance to the gates of Florence. The Florentines, animated by the presence of St. Ambrose, who declared that God would rescue them from their pagan enemies, made a vigorous defence; the barbarians pressed forward the siege with vigour, but at the moment when success seemed certain, they suddenly found themselves besieged in their turn by the army of Stilicho. The strict discipline of the Romans finally triumphed; Radagaisus was made prisoner, and ignominiously put to death; the greater part of his followers were sold as slaves. Thus Stilicho became a second time the saviour of Italy. Gaul was less fortunate; all the barbarians that had remained behind, when Radagaisus forced the Alps, united with the fugitives from Florence, and formed plundering bands, which roamed at will over the province, whose soldiers had been withdrawn to aid in the defence of Italy. An adventurer in Britain, who assumed the name of Constantine, deemed this a favourable opportunity for attempting to assume the empire; the legions in the island readily agreed to support his claims, and he soon landed at Boulogne with a formidable army. His first efforts were directed against the German marauders, over whom he gained some slight advantages. These victories, magnified by fame, induced the Gauls, justly indignant at the neglect of the court of Milan, to embrace the cause of Constantine, and Spain immediately imitated the example of the Gallic provinces. To oppose this formidable usurpation, Stilicho entered

into a close alliance with Alaric, but before the negotiations could take effect this able minister was no more. Olympius, a crafty and unprincipled statesman, who veiled his malignity with the cloak of religion, represented to Honorius that he was an emperor only in name, and that his reign could only be dated from the death of Stilicho. It was soon manifest that the conspirators could not delay the execution of their plot with safety : Stilicho's friends were massacred in the camp at Pavia, and while he was devising means of revenging their fate, he was suddenly attacked at Bologna, and forced to seek refuge in a sanctuary. By the perfidious representations of Count Heraclian, he was induced to quit the protection of the church ; he was immediately delivered to the executioner, and met his fate with firmness worthy of his fame. (A.D. 408.)

The only principle that seemed to be adopted by the new ministers of Honorius, was fierce hatred to the memory of Stilicho ; his friends were cruelly persecuted, the edicts of toleration which he had recommended were withdrawn, the articles of the treaty he had concluded with Alaric were wantonly violated, and to crown the whole, the auxiliary barbarians scattered throughout Italy were massacred, without even a shadow of reasonable suspicion to justify such an atrocity. But an avenger was at hand. Alaric, after a display of moderation, which only tended to strengthen the arrogant confidence of the Romans, once more marched against Italy. No preparations were made to resist the invader ; Honorius shut himself up in the strong city of Ravenna, while the Goth speedily traversing north Italy, led his army over the Apennines, and pitched his camp under the walls of Rome. Nothing could exceed the surprise of the citizens at the appearance of an enemy before the walls of the Eternal City ; they were unable to account for an event that had no parallel in the history of the last six hundred years, and at length they determined that it must have been caused by the intrigues of Serena,

the widow of Stilicho and niece of Theodosius. When this unfortunate princess was sacrificed to the popular delusion, they actually expressed their astonishment at not beholding the Goths in full retreat. But Alaric soon taught them a different lesson : he kept the city closely blockaded ; famine with its attendant pestilence began to make frightful ravages in its streets, and at length it was resolved to purchase safety by the payment of an enormous ransom. Alaric raised the siege, but he sent for fresh reinforcements, and continued in Italy at the head of a hundred thousand men. (A.D. 409.)

In the mean time, the court of Honorius was the scene of intrigue, treachery, and assassination ; the wretched creatures who were raised to ministerial appointments neglected the care of public affairs, to plot the ruin of each other. All, however, united in refusing the most moderate terms of peace offered by Alaric, and excused their insane conduct, by pretended unwillingness to lower the majesty of the empire ! Alaric, at length wearied out, renewed the war ; he cut to pieces a large detachment sent to the relief of Rome, and advanced to besiege the hapless city a second time. To facilitate its reduction, he took possession of Ostia, where the provisions were stored for the support of the citizens ; and his threat of destroying the magazines compelled the Romans to surrender at discretion. Alaric entered the city. Attalus, the præfect of the city, was elected emperor, by the joint suffrages of the Goths and Romans. The greater part of Italy, weary of the tyranny and folly of Honorius, tendered allegiance to the new sovereign.

But Attalus was unable to guide the helm of affairs in such a dangerous crisis. His incapacity became soon so glaring, that he was deposed, and offers of peace again made to Honorius. Even this opportunity was neglected by the ministers of the court of Ravenna : they went farther— they took into their service Sarus, the personal enemy of

the Gothic leader, and published an insulting edict, declaring that Alaric's vices had for ever excluded him from the friendship of the emperor. Rome was once more doomed to suffer for the faults of its rulers ; Alaric for the third time led his hosts against its walls. (A.D. 410.) The Senate made vigorous preparations for defence, but their slaves rose in rebellion, and opened the gates to the Goths. It would be impossible to describe adequately the miseries inflicted on the captured city : the sanctuaries of religion alone were safe ; every where else barbarous cruelty and lust were gratified to their wildest excesses ; while the private revenge of forty thousand slaves, eager to avenge the wrongs of painful bondage, banished for a time the name of mercy. For five days the city was devoted to pillage ; it was evacuated on the morning of the sixth, and the Goths, laden with plunder, proceeded to the spoil of southern Italy. The southern provinces were easily subdued by the barbarians, and preparations were made for the invasion of Sicily, when the enterprises of the Goths were suddenly checked by the premature death of Alaric. His burial was a strange example of Gothic ferocity ; the little river Busentinus, having been diverted by the labour of captives from its course, a deep grave was dug in the vacant channel, into which were thrown the most precious spoils and trophies of Rome ; the body of the hero having been then placed in this extraordinary sepulchre, the waters were restored to their natural bed, and no sign remained to mark the spot where the scourge of Italy was deposited. For the better preservation of the secret, all the prisoners who had been employed in the work were ruthlessly massacred.

Adolphus, the brother and successor of Attila, made peace with Honorius, and married Placidia, the sister of the emperor. He led his forces, according to the terms of the treaty, from Campania into Gaul, where he founded a powerful kingdom, though he still professed allegiance to the emperor. Italy was thus delivered from the Goths, (A.D

412.) and permitted to enjoy a temporary respite. This was slightly interrupted in the following year by the revolt of count Heracian, the governor of Africa, who had hitherto steadily supported the cause of Honorius. The usurper entered the Tiber with a powerful fleet ; but he was defeated by an inferior force, and when he returned to Africa, his former adherents, disgusted by his pusillanimity, put him to death, and renewed their allegiance to Honorius. The valour of Constantius, a Roman general, who had been raised by his own merits, restored Gaul to the empire. Constantine, with other revolvers of meaner note, were captured and put to death. Spain was subdued by the Goths ; but after the murder of Adolphus and his children, the succeeding leader of the barbarians, Sigeric, became an enemy to the empire. His reign was fortunately brief, and Wallia, who was chosen in his stead, renewed the alliance with the court of Ravenna. Not only the Goths, but the Burgundians and Franks, obtained fixed settlements in Gaul during the reign of Honorius. It was stipulated that they should pay homage to the emperor, and perform military service, but they were allowed to plunder the hapless provincials at their pleasure.

About the same time, Britain was irrecoverably lost to the empire, or rather Honorius abdicated the rights of sovereignty over a province which he was no longer able to protect. Attacked by the Caledonians on the north, their coasts devastated by Saxon pirates, the Britons, having in vain sought aid from the empire, were forced to combine for their own protection. A kind of federative government was formed by the cities and towns which had grown to importance under the Roman government ; the bishops joined the representatives of these states in a national council, and the petty monarchs, or heads of tribes, were invited to share in their deliberations. In times of danger, a kind of dictator called a Pendragon was elected, but his authority was rarely acknowledged by the discordant parties

of the state. This constitution, if an irregular form of government, the creature of chance; may be dignified by such a name, contained within itself the elements of its own destruction. The petty chieftains gradually extended their sway over the commercial towns, and crushed them beneath the weight of brutal tyranny. "Britain is a land fruitful in tyrants," said St. Jerome, even before the nominal power of Rome was withdrawn. The ambition of these semi-barbarous chieftains led to a series of destructive wars, and rendered Britain an easy prey to the Saxon invaders.

The inglorious reign of Honorius lasted twenty-eight years; during the latter part of it, he was principally guided by the counsels of his sister Placidia, who, after being liberated from her captivity among the Goths, was married to the brave Constantine. This eminent general, after becoming the father of Honoria and Valentinian, and extorting from Honorius the title of Augustus, died prematurely, and his widow was received into her brother's palace. After she had for some years directed the feeble mind of Honorius, she was rendered an object of suspicion by the intrigues of the palace, and forced to seek refuge with her nephew, at the court of Constantinople. She was received with the greatest kindness, and instant measures were taken to protect the rights of her children, especially as, a few months after her arrival, intelligence was received of the death of Honorius. (A.D. 423.) The people of Constantinople, who knew little and cared less about the western emperor, affected to receive the account of his death with deep sorrow. For seven days the shops and gates of Constantinople were closed, and a prince unhonoured during life, was apparently lamented after death. The resolution adopted by the court of Constantinople, to support the claims of Placidia's children, once more connected the politics of the eastern and western empires. We shall therefore resume the history of the former, which we have hitherto deferred, in order to prevent confusion.

CHAPTER VI.

*From the Death of Rufinus, to the Accession of
Valentinian III. to the Empire of the West.*

(From A.D. 395 to A.D. 425.)

THE death of Rufinus, and the contumelious dismissal of Stilicho after he had delivered Greece from the Goths, severed the politics of the Eastern and Western empires. Arcadius resigned himself wholly to the eunuch Eutropius, on whom he conferred the highest dignities. The Byzantines endured such a disgraceful appointment with patience; but the Romans, who had not quite forgotten the manliness of their ancestors, found in it fresh grounds for the mingled hatred and contempt with which they began to view their Grecian brethren. Eutropius was as ambitious as Rufinus, but he was distinguished from his predecessor by a spirit of insatiate avarice; the government of the provinces was openly sold in Constantinople, and to enlarge this source of gain, the larger provinces were divided into departments, each under a separate ruler. All those whom the Eunuch either dreaded or envied were murdered or banished: Abundantius, to whom the wretch owed his elevation, was deprived of his estates, and doomed to exile, and poverty; Timasius, one of the few generals in the East that displayed military talent, was exiled to the Lybian deserts, and privately assassinated. Conscious that such crimes deserved, and might provoke retribution, the eunuch persuaded his master to publish a new law, by which the penalties of treason were denounced against all who conspired to destroy any of the imperial ministers or officers.

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justly enraged, ordered Eutropius to quit the court for ever ; and the Eunuch, overwhelmed with terror, fled to sanctuary. After a few days, Eutropius ventured to quit his place of refuge by night ; he was arrested, and sent a prisoner to the island of Cyprus. But this punishment did not satisfy the relentless Gainas ; supported by the courtiers, he procured an order for the late minister's trial and execution, which was gladly obeyed by the imperial officers. (A.D. 399). Gainas did not long enjoy the fruits of his perfidy ; the citizens of Constantinople, wearied by the excesses of the Goths, destroyed the flower of his army ; he was himself proclaimed a public enemy, forced to fly before the imperial forces, and slain, with the greater part of his followers, by the Huns, when he attempted to seek a shelter in Scythia.

The political influence of Persia rapidly declined after the death of Shah-poor the great ; his three sons, Ardeshir II., Shah-poor III., and Bahram IV., who successively inherited the throne, were only remarkable for the arts of peace ; but when Yezdejd*, the son of Bahram, was crowned, after the murder of his father, it was generally expected that he would enforce the claims of his ancestors to the empire of Asia. But Yezdejd determined to maintain peace with the Romans, and at the same time he published an edict conceding universal toleration to every creed, for which rare example of wisdom he is stigmatized by oriental historians with the epithet Al-Athim, or the Sinner. He feared that the Magians might inculcate less liberal sentiments into the mind of his successor, and he therefore entrusted the education of his favourite son, Bahram, to a chief of the Christian Arabs named No-man.†

* Some authors make him the son of Shah-poor the Great, and brother of Bahram.

† Mirkhond says, that Yezdejd adopted this resolution because

Eudoxia, after the death of Eutropius, succeeded to the influence which that minister had exercised over the feeble mind of Arcadius; she used her power with great cruelty, and indulged in the most profligate excesses. Chrysostom denounced her criminality with more zeal than prudence, and the empress placed herself at the head of a conspiracy formed for his destruction. Under the most frivolous charges he was arrested and sent into banishment (A.D. 404), but the citizens of Constantinople unanimously demanded his recall; the court was terrified into a submission, and the intrepid bishop was brought back amidst universal acclamations. Eudoxia would gladly have secured his friendship, but Chrysostom steadily refused to connect himself with a woman sullied by a thousand crimes. Enraged at the refusal, Eudoxia again began to intrigue against Chrysostom, and he instead of making any

so many of his children died in infancy, a fatality which he attributed to the unwholesome atmosphere around his palace. The same author gives the following singular account of Noman's conversion to Christianity: "Noman was originally a worshipper of idols, but he had a vizier who professed Christianity. One lovely morning in spring, Noman was sitting with his vizier on the top of the castle of Khúrnak; as his eyes wandered over the streams, the gardens, and the meadows that surrounded the castle, he remarked to his minister, that there was no country so lovely or so delightful as that which he beheld. 'True,' replied the vizier, 'but something is wanting to the perfection of the prospect.' The king asked, what defect he could discover in such a charming landscape?—'Sire,' replied the vizier, 'none of these things are eternal, they are all doomed to destruction.'—'What is there,' asked the monarch, 'that is not subject to decay?' The vizier answered, that the only place whose charms endured eternally was the garden of Divine Mercy, the glorious meads of Paradise, and that to gain admission into this dwelling of immortal delights, it was necessary to embrace the true faith, and submit to the decrees of God, the All-merciful. Noman, struck by these words, immediately became a Christian."

Mirkhond adds, that he subsequently abandoned his kingdom to wander over the earth as an ascetic penitent, and that he suddenly disappeared, leaving no trace of his fate behind him.

effort to conciliate her wrath, denounced her from the pulpit, commencing his sermon with these harsh words, "Herodias rages once more; she dances again before the king, again she demands the head of John*." Such an allusion was not likely to be forgotten or forgiven; Chrysostom was once more driven into exile, and all his partisans cruelly persecuted. On the very night of his arrest, the cathedral, the senate-house, and some adjacent buildings were burned to the ground; the conflagration was attributed to the vengeance of the bishop's followers, but though very severe inquisitions by torture were instituted, no evidence could be found to support a calumny which nevertheless has been repeated by many modern writers. Chrysostom died in exile, but his memory lived in the minds of the faithful: thirty years after his death, his remains were brought from their obscure grave to be interred honourably at Constantinople, and his name was inscribed in the list of saints and martyrs. Eudoxia died miserably, before her victim, and Arcadius soon followed her to the grave. (A.D. 408.)

But the consequences of Eudoxia's administration survived her; the Isaurians, plundering hordes that inhabited the lower ranges of Mount Taurus, devastated Asia Minor, and the connivance of the governor sent to protect the province was purchased by a share of the spoil. Complaints were made to the court, but a seasonable bribe to Eudoxia secured the impunity of the guilty ruler, and the Asiatic provinces were left a prey to the spoiler.

Theodosius II. succeeded his father, when he was only seven years old; his guardian Anthemius had held the high office of præfect of the east for several years with honour-

* The Sermon commencing with these words published in the works of Chrysostom is undoubtedly spurious, but that he used the expression is unfortunately too clearly proved by the concurrent testimony of historians.

able reputation, and had previously been an ambassador at the court of Persia, where he acquired the friendship of Yezdejerd. His first care was to secure the patronage of the Persian monarch for his ward, and the readiness with which this was conceded has probably given rise to the fable that Arcadius had chosen Yezdejerd as the guardian of his youthful heir. The king of Armenia had prepared to invade the empire as soon as he heard of the late emperor's decease, but he was recalled by the mandates of the Persian monarch. This mandate was fortunate for the Armenian nation; it afforded an opportunity to the Patriarch Sahag, and his assistant, Saint Mesrob, to complete in peace the establishment of Christianity, and to secure its permanency by the invention of the Armenian alphabet, which enabled their countrymen to read "in their own tongue the wonderful works of God."

Anthemius was resolved to adopt a peaceful course of policy, and when the Huns invaded the empire, he protracted negotiations until he had alienated the affections of the greater number of them from their sovereign Uldin. The barbarian monarch, suddenly deserted by the majority of his subjects, sought safety in flight; he was attacked by the imperial forces in his retreat, and defeated with great loss. Nor did the Præfect display less wisdom, when a fierce insurrection caused by a season of scarcity burst forth at Constantinople; he punished those fraudulent dealers who had taken advantage of the public distress, procured a supply of corn from Egypt, and instituted a fund for securing the regular importation of provisions. Under the wise administration of Anthemius, the eastern empire regained much of its former prosperity, while the west, under the feeble Honorius, was the scene of misery and confusion.

The African provinces were, however, an exception to the general prosperity. The Cyrenaic Pentapolis groaned under the oppression of its governor Andronicus, and the

office was consequently the great object of ambition to the prelates and clergy. A vacancy having occurred (A.D. 397) Eutropius undesignedly conferred a great benefit on the church, by procuring the election of John of Antioch, whose eloquence had obtained for him the epithet of Chrysostom, or the Golden Mouth. Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, who had aspired to the situation, vigorously resisted this appointment, and was only silenced by a threat of prosecution for various misdemeanors with which he had been charged. The inhabitants of Antioch were fondly attached to their eloquent pastor ; he amply returned their affections, and artifice was necessary to remove him from the city. A count of the empire proceeded to Antioch, besought John to accompany him on a visit to the tombs of the martyrs, arrested him as soon as they were beyond the walls, and had him safely conveyed to Constantinople.

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nearly twenty years; and seen her daughter united in marriage to the young emperor of the west, she incurred the resentment of Pulcheria, and was forced to retire into a monastery; she spent the rest of her life in devotional exercises, and never expressed any regret for the exalted station of which she had been deprived.

In spite of his love of ease, Theodosius could not escape from the toils of a Persian war; the irregular frontier of the Persian and Roman empires, the pretensions of both to supremacy over Armenia, and the religious zeal of the Christians on one side and fire-worshippers on the other, incessantly produced grounds for hostility. Bahram V., more commonly called Bahram Gour, from his passion for the chace of the gour, or wild ass, was one of the most warlike of the descendants of Sassan. He had been educated in Arabia, as we have already mentioned, and had thus escaped the enervating influence of the luxury that prevailed in Modain. His munificence, his wisdom, and his valour, are the theme of general praise. In the beginning of his reign, the fierce tribes from beyond the Oxus invaded Khorassan to the number of twenty five thousand men. Bahram, with only seven thousand followers, surprised their camp by night, and routed them with great slaughter. He also carried his arms into northern India, and acquired great influence over the princes of that country. His war with Theodosius was sanguinary, but indecisive; it was at length terminated by a treaty, which left all parties in the position they held before the war. This contest was principally remarkable for a beautiful example of true Christian charity, displayed by Acacius, bishop of Amida. He sold the plate belonging to his church, declaring that works of mercy were more acceptable to God than vessels of gold and silver. With the money thus raised he redeemed seven thousand Persian captives, supplied their wants with affectionate liberality, and sent them home to inform Bahram of the nature of that religion which he persecuted. Bahram,

while hunting in the fine valley between Shiraz and Ispahan, now called the vale of heroes, was suddenly plunged with his horse into a deep pool, where steed and rider instantly sunk, nor were their bodies ever discovered*.

* "When encamped," says Sir John Malcolm, "in 1810, near the springs, into one of which Bahram plunged, being aware of their dangerous nature, I directed that none of my escort should bathe. This order was unfortunately disobeyed by a young man of the 17th dragoons; and though reported a good swimmer he was drowned: his body was recovered, being near the edge. The spring in which he lost his life was, as we were told, the same into which Bahram had fallen."

This lamented writer mentions a curious tradition, which he heard near the ruins of one of Bahram's hunting seats, which he visited in 1810. It states the occasion on which that palace was built. "Bahram, proud of his excellence as an archer, wished to display it before a favourite lady. He carried her to the plain: an antelope was soon found, asleep. The monarch shot an arrow with such precision as to graze its ear. The animal awoke, and put his hind-foot to the ear, to strike off the fly by which he conceived himself annoyed. Another arrow fixed his hoof to his horn. Bahram turned to the lady in expectation of her praises; she coolly observed 'practice makes perfect.' Enraged at this uncourtly observation, the king ordered her to be sent into the mountains to perish. Her life was saved by the mercy of a minister, who allowed her to retire to a small village, on the side of a hill. She lodged in an upper room, to which she ascended twenty steps. On her arrival, she bought a small calf, which she carried up and down stairs every day. This exercise was continued for four years, and the increase of her strength kept pace with the increasing size of the animal. Bahram, who had supposed her dead, after a fatiguing chase stopped one evening at this village. He saw a young woman carrying a large cow up a flight of twenty steps. He was astonished, and sent to inquire how strength so extraordinary had been acquired by a person of such a delicate form. The lady said, she would communicate her secret to none but Bahram, and to him only on his condescending to come alone to her house. The king instantly went: on his repeating his admiration of what he had seen, she bade him not lavish praises where they were not due. 'Practice makes perfect,' said she, in her natural voice, and at the same time lifted up her veil. Bahram recognized and embraced his

The Persian war had just been concluded when Placidia and the young Valentinian came to seek refuge at the Byzantine court, as has been related in the preceding chapter. They were kindly received by Pulcheria and Theodosius, and when intelligence arrived of the death of Honorius, Theodosius resigned his own claims, and fitted out a powerful armament to support his cousin's accession to the throne of the west, which had been usurped by John, the secretary of the late emperor. The success of this expedition was facilitated by an apparent misfortune; the fleet was dispersed by a storm, and its commander, Ardaburius, made a prisoner. The captive successfully exerted himself to revive the loyalty of his guardians; a large division of John's forces resolved to maintain the cause of their rightful sovereign, and these being joined by the imperial cavalry, which had marched round over the Alps, soon dethroned the usurper. John was ignominiously put to death, and Valentinian III., at the early age of six years, received the title of Augustus, and was placed under the guardianship of his mother. (A.D. 425.) Thus the sceptres of both empires were virtually swayed by women, Pulcheria ruling in the east and Placidia in the west.

CHAPTER VII.

From the accession of Valentinian III. to the overthrow of the Western Empire.

(From A.D. 472. to A.D. 479.)

PLACIDIA emulated the power of Pulcheria, without possessing the same virtue, or ability. Anxious to retain the

favourite. Pleased with the lesson she had given him, and delighted with the love which had led her to pass four years in an endeavour to regain his esteem, he ordered a palace to be built on the spot, as a hunting-seat and memorial of this event."—*Malcolm's Persia*, I. 94.

supreme authority, she enervated her son by a dissolute education, and studiously diverted him from every manly pursuit. Her armies, however, were directed by two generals worthy of the better days of Rome, Boniface, the governor of Africa, and Ætius, the commander of the Italian legions. Their union might have supported the sinking empire, their discord hastened its fall: Count Boniface had steadily supported the cause of Placidia during her exile: he had supplied her with the troops and treasures of Africa, and had thus greatly contributed to her success. Ætius, on the contrary, had embraced the cause of the usurper, and was actually leading an army of sixty thousand Huns to his aid from the banks of the Danube, when he received the news of John's defeat and death. He made his peace with Placidia on advantageous terms, and, taking up his abode at the court of Ravenna, he won the favour of the empress by assiduous flattery, but, at the same time, he maintained a secret correspondence with his barbarian allies. Induced by the subtle arts of Ætius, Placidia recalled Boniface from the province of Africa, while at the same time, Boniface was informed by the perfidious minister, that he would be put to death as soon as he landed in Italy. The governor of Africa, in an evil hour, raised the standard of revolt, and invited to his aid the Vandals who had settled in Spain, in spite of the urgent remonstrances made to him by St. Augustin, the celebrated bishop of Hippo. Genseric, the king of these barbarians, passed the straits of Gibraltar with an army of fifty thousand effective men, but which by enrolling the aged and children he apparently swelled to eighty thousand. The Moors who had embraced the heresy of the Donatists, and had been on that account severely persecuted by the orthodox clergy, gladly joined the Arian Vandals, and Genseric found a strong party, in every city that he approached, eager to facilitate his success.

Great surprise and consternation was caused at the court of Ravenna, by the news of this revolt. Placidia could not

believe that a general who had steadily supported her cause in the season of her adversity, would have waited to declare himself her enemy, until she had become mistress of the empire. She secretly sent Darius, an officer of high rank, into Africa, to confer with Boniface, and obtain some explanation of his strange proceedings. Darius discharged his delicate commission with great zeal and discretion ; he remonstrated with the governor on the dangers of his conduct, but was overwhelmed with astonishment when Boniface laid before him the letters of *Ætius*. Hastily returning to Ravenna, he informed Placidia of that general's double treason, and the empress instantly sent him back, to assure Boniface of her unchanged friendship.

Boniface returned to his allegiance, (A. D. 430.) but found it impossible to remedy the evils that his rashness had produced. Genseric refused to go back to Spain ; he denounced the count as a double traitor, and declared that Africa should henceforth be his kingdom. Never was any invasion more sanguinary calamitous than that of the Vandals ; bigoted Arians as well as furious barbarians, they were at once conquerors and persecutors, and the richest province of the Roman empire was desolated by fire, sword, and famine. Boniface marched against the Vandals, but was defeated with severe loss, and forced to shut himself up in Hippo. Genseric laid siege to this opulent Numidian city, but the garrison, animated by the exhortations of Saint Augustin, made a vigorous defence ; even after the bishop's death the memory of his discourses preserved the inhabitants from yielding to despair, and Genseric, after a siege of fourteen months, retired from the walls. The emperor of the East sent a body of auxiliaries, under the command of Aspar, to the aid of Boniface in the following year ; the Romans resolved once more to hazard a battle, and were totally defeated. Among the prisoners taken by the Vandals was a young soldier, whose intrepid carriage attracted the notice of Genseric ; he learned that he was

named Marcian, the secretary of Aspar. Prognosticating the future fortunes of this young man, Genseric sought his friendship, and dismissed him without ransom, having first obtained a promise that he would never act as an enemy to the Vandals *.

Aspar returned to Constantinople, where he found the emperor disturbed by the factions of the citizens, and the disputes of the clergy. Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, after having been long the scourge of heretics, had at length become a heretic himself, and his errors were adopted by a large body of the eastern Christians; indeed many of the Asiatic churches adhere to his peculiar creed at the present day †. Boniface ventured to visit the court of Ravenna, where he was received very warmly by Placidia, and invested with the highest honours of the state. Ætius levied an army to expel his rival; a battle was fought

* The legendary historians say that Marcian, exhausted by fatigue, lay down to rest upon the sand, and that an eagle hovered over him with extended wings, to shield him from the sun. Genseric, deeming this an omen of future fortune, hastened to gain the friendship of one whom he believed destined to inherit the empire.

† While Nestorius was deluding the Christians, the Jews in Crete were the victims of an imposture the most gross in the annals of that credulous people. A Cretan Jew declared that he was Moses, and that God had sent him to lead his chosen people once more across the sea into the Land of Promise. Immense crowds followed this madman as he made the tour of the island; his mission was received with implicit credit, and on the day fixed for his departure, multitudes prepared to accompany him through the waves. He led his followers to the extremity of a lofty promontory, and ordered them in full faith to cast themselves into the waves. Thousands obeyed, and were either dashed to pieces against the rocks, or drowned. A few were saved by some Christian fishermen, and these informed their countrymen of the delusion. Search was made for the impostor, but no traces of him could be found, and the Jews consoled themselves with the belief that they had been deluded by a malignant demon in human shape. Ecclesiastical historians add, that many of the Jews, ashamed of this error, became converts to Christianity.

near Ravenna, in which Boniface was victorious, but he received a mortal wound that proved fatal in three months. Placidia at first prepared to punish Ætius, but finding that his barbarian allies rendered him too powerful, she agreed to receive him again into favour, and reinstated him in all his former dignities.

A scandalous circumstance in the imperial family produced results more fatal than the discord of Ætius and Boniface. Placidia designed her daughter Honoria for a single life, dreading that her husband might become a formidable rival to the feeble Valentinian. Honoria felt no desire to emulate Pulcheria; she secretly offered her hand to Attila, king of the Huns, thus affording that warrior a pretext for invading Italy, of which he was not slow in availing himself. But before his arrival, Honoria disgraced herself by an intrigue with one of her own servants, and was forced to retire to Constantinople.

The empire of the Huns had been gradually extending from their first entrance into Europe. Ætius had abandoned to them Pannonia, as the price of their aid in his ambitious schemes, and they had thus obtained a formidable position on the frontiers of both empires. Theodosius could only preserve the Byzantine dominions from their ravages by paying an annual tribute to their king Rugilas, but to gloss over this disgrace, the monarch was persuaded to accept the empty title of an imperial general. On the death of Rugilas, his nephews and successors, Attila and Bleda, renewed the treaty with Theodosius, but exacted very harsh conditions, and compelled the ambassadors to submit to degrading observances, a circumstance felt very severely at the Byzantine court, where etiquette was deemed of higher importance than the salvation of the empire. Genseric, having learned that Theodosius meditated the expulsion of the Vandals from Africa, entered into close alliance with Attila, and engaged him to attack the eastern empire. The Huns at once entered the northern provinces, which they

desolated with fire and sword. The little town of Azimuntium, on the borders of Thrace, alone resisted their ravages, and its citizens had the glory of extorting a separate treaty from Attila, while Theodosius purchased a dishonourable peace, by submitting to all the demands of the insolent barbarians. The distractions in the church still continued; St. Cyril, the great and successful opponent of Nestorius, had been succeeded in the see of Alexandria by Dioscorus, who patronized the Eutychian heresy, and Egypt was filled with confusion by the violence with which this prelate supported his opinions. Constantinople exhibited a still more unworthy spectacle; while the Huns were threatening the utter ruin of the empire, the Byzantines were engaged in a war of factions respecting the games in the circus. The drivers of the chariots who contended at these games were distinguished by the colour of their liveries, white, green, red and blue; one of each colour raced together for the prize; each citizen declared himself the patron of a particular colour, and the parties thus formed were named factions. The Byzantines, who dared not meet an enemy, fought furiously against each other, and those who would not shed one drop of blood to save their country, sacrificed their lives in defence of a favourite livery. Theodosius, unable to meet the Huns in the field, made an infamous effort to procure the assassination of Attila; but the plot was detected, and he could only avert the just wrath of the barbarian by new and more degrading concessions. He died soon afterwards, (A.D. 450.) and left the empire reduced to the brink of ruin by his cowardice and incapacity, for which his amiable disposition, and constant good intentions, were but a feeble atonement. Pulcheria elevated Marcian to the empire, and gave him the title of husband, but would not break the vow of chastity she had sworn. Marcian's virtue justified her choice; for seven years he preserved the Byzantine empire in security, while the Roman territories were suffering the most dreadful calamities. His love of peace, how-

ever, led him into some dangerous errors ; he allowed the Persians to complete the subjugation of Armenia, and the barbarians to devastate the western empire without interruption.

Attila threatened the Eastern and Western empires at the same moment : his choice was determined by the solicitation of the Franks who had established themselves in the Belgic provinces, but had recently suffered some severe defeats from the Romans, and perhaps by the entreaties of the princess Honoria, who besought him to become her champion and deliverer. The Huns penetrated into the very heart of Gaul, and laid siege to Orleans ; Ætius immediately entered into close alliance with Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, a worthy successor of Alaric, and the united forces encountered the Huns on the plains of Châlons. The battle was long and dubious ; Theodoric was slain in the beginning of the engagement, but his son Torismond revived the spirits of his followers, and forced the Huns to seek shelter within their entrenchments. Neither army could claim a decisive victory, but the retreat of the Huns beyond the Rhine seemed a confession of defeat.

Attila was not dispirited by his failure : in the following year (A.D. 452) he renewed his demand for the hand of the princess Honoria, and her share of the empire ; a peremptory refusal was returned, upon which he passed the eastern Alps, and led his forces into Italy. The rich and well fortified city of Aquileia resisted his progress ; three months were spent in the siege, but at length it was taken by assault, plundered, and razed to the ground, so that in the next century it was difficult to identify the ruins of the once flourishing Aquileia. From thence Attila extended his ravages over the rich plains of Lombardy ; the cities yielded to the Huns without a struggle, and the imperial Milan received the barbarous conqueror into its palaces. Valentinian meditated flight from Italy, but he was persuaded first to try the effects of negotiation.

Attila agreed to evacuate the peninsula on the payment of an enormous ransom, as the dowry of the princess Honoria, threatening if the princess was not given to him that he would return in the following year, with a more formidable army. Death however arrested the savage warrior in the midst of his destructive career ; he died suddenly of apoplexy before he could withdraw his soldiers from Italy, and the empire of the Huns fell to pieces, no one of the several chieftains possessing sufficient authority to control the rest*.

The crimes and follies of Valentinian prevented the Romans from availing themselves of the dispersion of their enemies ; he procured the assassination of Aetius, whose abilities he envied and whose ambition he feared ; and he disgusted the Roman nobility, by offering violence to the wife of Petronius Maximus, one of the most eminent senators. Two of the barbarians attached to Aetius resolved to avenge his death ; they attacked the emperor in the Campus Martius, while his numerous train looked on as unconcerned spectators, and slew him, together with the guilty ministers of his pleasures. (A.D. 455.)

Petronius Maximus was next elected to the throne ; he obtained by force the hand of the empress Eudoxia, and boasted to her that he had procured the assassination of her former husband. Eudoxia, the descendant of an imperial line, could not pardon the insult, but she had no partisans in Italy ; her father and her aunt Pulcheria were dead, her mother was a disgraced exile, and a stranger swayed the sceptre of Constantinople. Under these circumstances she turned her eyes to Africa, and secretly implored the aid of Genseric. The king of the Vandals readily obeyed her summons ; Maximus had scarcely pos-

* The memory of Attila is preserved in the ancient Scandinavian ballads ; in these chaunts he is said to have been assassinated by one of his wives, who was anxious to avenge the slaughter of her family by the Huns.

sessed the throne three months, when he learned that the barbarians had disembarked at the mouth of the Tiber, and were preparing to march against Rome. The emperor resolved to seek safety in flight, but no sooner did he appear in the street, than he was attacked by the exasperated populace, and mortally wounded by a Burgundian soldier. The mob followed up the attack with such weapons as chance supplied ; until his mangled body had lost the very semblance of humanity, when it was ignominiously cast into the Tiber.

The death of Maximus did not delay the advance of Genseric ; on the third day he appeared before the walls of Rome, the citizens made no defence, and the standards of the barbarians were planted in the Capitol. Rome was delivered up to plunder and every outrage that savage passions could dictate for fourteen days ; at the end of that time Genseric returned to his ships, bearing with him among other precious spoils, the ancient vessels that Titus had taken from the Temple of Jerusalem, and the consecrated plate of the Christian churches. A melancholy train of captives followed in the procession ; they were transported into Africa, where they were forced to endure all the horrors of slavery. Their calamities were in some degree alleviated by the pious charity of Deogratias, bishop of Carthage, who sold the gold and silver plate of his church to procure money for their relief.

Avitus, the præfect of Gaul, was chosen emperor in the room of Maximus, by the general councils of the provincials. He was principally indebted for his elevation to the active friendship of Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, whose military talents revived the memory of Alaric. Theodoric overthrew the kingdom of the Suevi, but while he was engaged in this expedition the reign of Avitus had come to a close. The Romans had never been favourably disposed towards him ; they with justice regarded him as the mere creature of the Gothic monarch, and a knowledge

of their sentiments induced Ricimer, the commander of the barbarians in the imperial service, on his return from a successful expedition, to demand the emperor's resignation. Avitus readily complied, but dreading the violence of his former subjects he resolved on returning to Gaul : he was seized with a mortal disease in the midst of his journey, and died before he could pass the Alps.

After an interval of several months, Ricimer, yielding to the almost unanimous wishes of the Italians, conferred the imperial dignity on Majorian, who was eminently distinguished by his abilities as a general and a statesman. He commenced his reign by a brilliant victory over the Vandals who had landed in Campania, but convinced that his utmost vigilance could not protect the coast of Italy from their naval depredations, he resolved, with a spirit worthy of the better days of Rome, to carry the war into Africa itself. Genseric received timely intimation of his approaching danger, from some traitors in the imperial court ; directed by their secret advice, he attacked the unguarded Roman fleet, and destroyed the greater part of it in the harbour of Carthagenæ. Ricimer took advantage of this calamity to rouse the inconstant barbarians against the emperor ; the soldiers broke out into open mutiny in the imperial camp at Tortonæ, and Majorian was compelled to abdicate. He died of dysentery five days after his resignation of the crown.

Ricimer prevailed upon the senate to elect his creature Libius Severus to the empire, and under his name the barbarian general was for six years the real sovereign of Italy. But the provinces beyond the Alps were not obedient to this usurped authority ; Marcellinus in Dalmatia, and Ægidius in Gaul, refused to acknowledge the power of Ricimer or his creature, but asserted and maintained their independence. Italy itself was devastated by the piratical incursions of the Vandals, and Ricimer was at length induced to purchase the aid of the Byzantine

emperor, by acknowledging his right to nominate the sovereign of the West.

Leo, commonly called the Thracian, who now occupied the throne of Constantinople, had been chosen emperor after the death of Marcian principally through the influence of Aspar, who commanded the imperial guards. Leo however soon found that Aspar wished to retain the supreme power in his own hands, and several angry controversies arose between the new emperor and his too powerful subject. They were finally terminated by the assassination of that minister and his eldest son. While Aspar continued in power he secretly favoured the Vandals, because they like himself professed the Arian creed, and he had procured the payment of a large dowry to Genseric, as the marriage portion of Eudoxia, the last representative of the Theodosian family, who had married the son of the Vandal monarch. When the influence of Aspar began to decline, Leo turned his attention to the western empire, and became anxious to remedy the evils by which it was afflicted. In conjunction with the Roman senate, Leo nominated to the imperial dignity Anthemius, maternal grandson of the Anthemius who had governed the eastern empire so prudently during the minority of Theodosius II. The new sovereign sailed to Italy with a numerous train of attendants: he was enthusiastically received by the Romans, and his power seemed to be fixed on a permanent foundation by the marriage of his daughter with Ricimer. The union of the two empires was followed by a joint expedition against the Vandals in Africa, which was at first eminently successful; but the Grecian general, either from ignorance or cowardice, did not profit by his victories: Genseric persuaded him to consent to a truce for five days, and during this interval he prepared a fleet and a squadron of fire-ships, with which he suddenly attacked the Roman navy. The Romans, completely surprised, made but a feeble resistance; the greater part of their ships were destroyed, and it was

with difficulty that the generals succeeded in bringing home a portion of their shattered forces. Nor were the interests of the empire better maintained in Spain and Gaul ; Euric, who had obtained the Gothic crown by the murder of his brother Theodoric, extended the dominion of the Visigoths from the banks of the Rhone almost to the shores of the Atlantic, and Anthemius could only assist his subjects by hiring for their defence twelve thousand British auxiliaries, who soon became the scourge of the unhappy country they were paid to protect.

Ricimer soon became impatient of the power of Anthemius, and prepared once more to change his sovereign. His choice fell upon Olybrius, who had married Placidia, the daughter of Valentinian, and who was secretly instigated to accept the crown by the emperor of Constantinople. Anthemius, supported by the senate and citizens of Rome, and by a Gothic army, made a vigorous defence ; but after a siege of three months the city was taken by storm, Anthemius murdered, and the unfortunate Romans again subjected to the insolence and cruelty of barbarous conquerors. The extravagant excesses in which Ricimer indulged after his victory brought on a painful disease, which quickly proved fatal, and his creature Olybrius soon followed him to the grave. (A.D. 472.)

Julius Nepos was next nominated to the empire of the west, by the court of Constantinople ; and Glycerius, who had at first appeared as his competitor, exchanged the empty honours of the empire for the bishopric of Salona. But Nepos had scarcely established his court at Ravenna, when he heard that the army of the barbarian confederates to whom the defence of Italy was entrusted had resolved to march against him, under the command of the patrician Orestes. Nepos, without waiting their approach, fled into Dalmatia, where, after the lapse of five years, he was assassinated, by command of his ancient rival Glycerius. Orestes conferred the crown on his son Romulus Momyllus, who is more commonly called Augustulus, and prepared to exert

himself in restoring the tranquility of Italy. But the barbarian confederates, who had aided in the expulsion of Nepos, were badly disposed to submit to the equitable rule of Orestes ; they broke out into open rebellion, under the guidance of Odoacer, the son of a chieftain that had commanded one of the hordes of Attila ; Orestes and his brother Paul were slain, and the helpless Augustulus was forced to place himself at the disposal of Odoacer. (A.D.476.)

With the deposition of Augustulus terminated the line of emperors of the west. Odoacer abolished the office as useless and expensive ; the senate concurred in his determination, and Zeno, who had succeeded his father-in-law Leo on the throne of Constantinople, agreed to a change that left him nominally sole emperor. Odoacer received from Zeno the empty title of Patrician, but he himself assumed the name and authority of king of Italy. During a brilliant reign of fourteen years, he preserved the tranquillity of the peninsula, and remedied many of the calamities produced by late distractions ; but at the end of that time, he sunk beneath the superior genius of Theodoric king of the Ostrogoths, one of the few monarchs in that age, whose valour in war and prudent administration in peace entitle him to the admiration of posterity.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Establishment of the Franks in Gaul.

(From A.D. 479. to A.D. 565.)

ODOACER, after proclaiming himself king of Italy, with the consent of the senate, transferred to Euric, who had raised the Gothic name to greater eminence than it had attained since the days of Alaric, all the ancient conquests of Rome beyond the Alps as far as the Rhine and the ocean. The leaders of the Burgundians * were at the same time permit-

* Buhr, Gunds, "allied warriors," softened by the Latins into *Burgundii*.

ted to take the title of kings, but they soon engaged in mutual wars, which terminated in the establishment of Gondebald* as chief of the nation. Euric died leaving his kingdom to an infant son, the Burgundians were weakened by civil wars, and Gaul was thus exposed a tempting prize to the ambition of adventurous warriors. Two competitors appeared; Lyagrius, the son of Egidius, who governed the Roman province, and whose father had for a time been acknowledged king of the Franks; and Clovis †, the son of Childeric ‡, king of the Salian Franks, or, as they were sometimes called, the Merovingians, from the chief who led the tribe into Belgium §. Tournay was the capital of the kingdom of Clovis, which included only a small portion of the Flemish provinces, and could furnish an army of no more than five thousand men. With these forces he attacked his rival near Soissons, and gained a decisive victory. (A.D. 486.) Lyagrius fled for refuge to the court of the Gothic king at Toulouse, but the guardians of the young Alaric, dreading the vengeance of the conquerors, surrendered him to Clovis, by whose commands he was strangled in prison. His victory gave the Frank an opportunity of allying himself by marriage to any of the neighbouring sovereigns; he chose for his spouse Clotilda ||, a Christian princess, the niece of the Burgundian Gondebald. Clovis, though a pagan; did not prevent his queen from having his children baptized in the Christian faith, and he gradually began to feel the force of her arguments in favour of the true religion. At length he was so far won over, that he declared

* Gonde bald, "pacific above all."

† Originally Hhlodo wig, "a famous warrior;" the cotemporary Latin writers softened the name into Clodovecus, and afterwards into Clovis; in the tenth century it was written Ludovicus, and then finally became Louis.

‡ Hilde rik, "beautiful in combat."

§ Mere wig, "an eminent warrior."

|| Hlodo hilda, "brilliant and noble;" the ancient writers call her Chlotilda, and the moderns Clotilda.

his readiness to adopt the queen's religion as soon as he received a convincing proof of the power of her God. Such an occasion soon offered ; the Allemans and several other German tribes, jealous of the growing power of the Franks, combined for their destruction ; the armies met at Tolbiac, near Cologne, and Clovis appeared on the very brink of ruin. In his distress he addressed his prayers to the God of Clotilda ; the fortune of the day immediately changed, and instead of a ruinous defeat, he gained a decisive victory. (A.D. 496.) The greater part of the conquered army enlisted under his banners, and thus the battle of Tolbiac, which threatened such fatal consequences, became the source of his future strength and fortunes. The venerable Remigius, on the following Christmas-day, administered the 'sacrament of baptism' to the new convert in the cathedral of Rheims, and received as a reward all the land that he could run round while the king was taking his customary sleep after dinner. Three thousand Frank warriors were baptized on the same day as their sovereign, and their example was speedily followed by the entire nation.

By a singular chance, Clovis was at this time the only orthodox sovereign in Christendom, all the others having embraced the Arian heresy, or some modification of it ; his conversion was therefore regarded as an important triumph by the catholics throughout Gaul and Italy. Pope Anastasius wrote him a letter of congratulation, and St. Avitus declared that "the faith of the Frank was the triumph of the Church." The bishops throughout Gaul became the most efficient assistants of the Christian king ; they urged their flocks to tender him allegiance, and by their exertions rather than by his own power, the dominions of Clovis at

* Old legends say, that the Holy Vial (*Sainte Ampoule*), long used to contain the oil with which the kings of France were anointed at their coronation, was brought from heaven by a white dove on the day of the baptism of Clovis.

the close of the fifth century, or twenty-five years after the fall of the western empire, extended to the Ocean ; to the Loire, where they bordered the kingdom of the Visigoths ; to the Rhone, by which they were separated from the territories of the Burgundians ; and to the Rhine, by which they were divided from the possessions of the independent German tribes.

The form of government established by Clovis was purely military : his soldiers were an army of occupation, that held Gaul as a conquered country ; they were quartered on the natives, who were bound to provide for their support ; no Frank engaged in agriculture, or in any pursuit that would divert him from the art of war. In the spring of every year the Franks assembled in arms in the Champ de Mars, near Paris, which had now become their capital, to determine what country should be the theatre of their next campaign.

The Burgundians were next doomed to encounter the Franks. Clotilda encouraged her husband to the war, through a desire of revenging the injuries she had suffered in childhood from her uncle Gondebald ; the clergy added the weight of their recommendations, because the Burgundian monarch favoured the Arian heresy. Opposed by the orthodox prelates in his own dominions, and betrayed by his brother, Gondebald was easily defeated, and forced to purchase safety by paying tribute. Scarcely, however, had Clovis withdrawn his forces, when Gondebald slew his treacherous brother, and withdrew his allegiance ; but at the same time, by making some important concessions to his subjects, and conciliating the bishops by a feigned anxiety to return to the orthodox faith, he so strengthened himself, that Clovis did not venture to renew the invasion.

When Britain was deserted by the Romans, its inhabitants, long unused to war, were unable to resist the Picts and Scots, who crossed the Tweed in wicker boats, and devastated the northern counties ; at the same time the

eastern coasts of the island were harassed by pirates from the Baltic, equally merciless and avaricious. Under these circumstances the Britons solicited the aid of the Angles and Saxons, who delivered them from the Scots only to make them their own prey. While the Franks were extending their empire over Gaul, the Saxons were similarly engaged in the reduction of Britain, but not being united like the Franks under a single head, their progress was less rapid, and frequently checked. The Heptarchy, or seven kingdoms founded by the Saxons in England, was harassed by internal discords, of which the Britons took advantage. The struggle was protracted for a century ; and finally the Britons retiring beyond the Severn founded the kingdom of Wales, which not only maintained its independence, but survived the Saxon dynasty.

While the Western empire was thus divided into new kingdoms, the court of Constantinople seemed sunk in indolence and luxury. The intrigues of the palace occupied more attention than the revolutions of kingdoms, and the empire owed its safety more to the discords of its enemies than the wisdom of its rulers. Zeno, the son-in-law and successor of Leo, was driven into exile by the queen-dowager Verina ; he was soon recalled by his fickle subjects, and the queen's associates were by a refinement of cruelty starved to death. On the death of Zeno, his wife Ariadne gave her hand and crown to Anastasius, a virtuous but weak sovereign, who was unfit to wield the sceptre in a period of danger. The empire was threatened by Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, who had been educated as a hostage at the Byzantine court, and had served in the imperial armies. This prince was driven to make war rather by the wants of his subjects than his own inclination ; after having obtained several triumphs he compelled the emperor Zeno to sign an ignominious treaty, but fearing that the inconstancy of the Byzantines and the turbulence of the Goths would soon lead to its in-

fraction, he resolved to undertake some enterprise that would lead the Goths to a distant land, where they might obtain glory and plunder. With this design he visited Constantinople, and easily obtained from Zeno a grant of the imperial claims over Italy; it is, however, disputed whether the cession was absolute or conditional; the latter is the more probable, for Zeno's successors always regarded Italy as a portion of their inheritance.

It was in the midst of winter (A.D. 488.) that Theodoric commenced his march towards the Alps; the Goths, full of confidence, abandoned their fields and houses; they took with them in waggons their wives, their children, the aged and the infirm, looking upon Italy as an assured conquest. A few only, either through attachment to their birth-place, or from distrust in their leader, retired to the shores of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, where they formed a small but gallant horde in the reign of Justinian.

The troops of Theodoric were badly supplied with provisions; in the season of their march, plunder and the chase afforded very scanty resources; famine and its attendant disease soon raged in the camp. Still they advanced undauntedly to the river Ulca, a confluent of the upper Danube, where they found the opposite bank lined by the Gepidæ, whom Odoacer had engaged to resist their advance. A fierce battle ensued; the Goths recoiled from the shower of darts hurled upon them by the enemy, when Theodoric once more leading a chosen band to the charge, drove the Gepidæ from their post. The Goths then passing the river won an easy victory; the greater part of the Gepidæ together with their king fell, their magazines were captured, and a body of Sarmatian cavalry passed over to the service of the conquerors.

In the following spring, Theodoric entered Italy through the Venetian territories; he found Odoacer strongly posted behind the river Sontius, between Aquileia and the Julian Alps, having his line defended by the river in front, and

palisadoed ramparts on each flank. The Goths halted on the opposite side for a few days, to refresh themselves and their horses. On the 27th of March, they forded the river, stormed the intrenchments of the Heruli, and gained a signal victory; Odoacer fled to Verona. Theodoric, believing Italy gained, dated the commencement of his reign from the day of this battle. A second battle was fought at Verona with a similar result, and the Goths advancing to Milan obtained possession of the city.

Tufa, who commanded for Odoacer in Milan, feigned to desert to the Goths, and acquired so rapidly the confidence of Theodoric, that he was entrusted with the command of a large division sent to reduce Faventia. Odoacer having received secret intelligence from Tufa, intercepted the devoted band, and slew all the Goths employed in the expedition. Theodoric, enraged at this treachery, put to death the remainder of the Milanese garrison, but revenge could not retrieve his losses; he was forced to retreat to Pavia, (Ticinum) where he took up his winter-quarters, and to seek aid from Alaric, king of the Visigoths. Odoacer for some time continued superior in the field, but at length the Goths, though with inferior forces, encountered him on the banks of the Adda; the battle was obstinate and sanguinary, it ended in the total defeat of the Heruli; Odoacer with difficulty escaped to Ravenna. The strength of the city for three years defied the utmost efforts of the besiegers, until at length Odoacer surrendered on condition that he should enjoy the honours of royalty conjointly with Theodoric. The result of such a treaty might easily have been predicted; after a few days of festivity, Odoacer, on a false accusation of treachery, was murdered at a banquet, and his children, relatives, and favourite followers shared his fate. Theodoric immediately took the title of king of Italy, and Anastasius, the successor of Zeno, after many delays was forced to acknowledge his sovereignty.

The new king began his reign by dividing the third part

of Italy among his followers ; he did not, however, try to mingle them with the Italians, but took care to keep the Goths a separate people. Their lands were given to them on condition of military service ; they were obliged to appear in arms when summoned, and to take their turn in garrisoning the frontiers of the empire. The greater part of the ancient western empire submitted to the rule of the Gothic sovereign, who showed himself as prudent in peace as he had been valiant in war. Italy under his reign recovered from the calamities which the cruel wars of the preceding century had occasioned ; Rome once more beheld a gleam of its former prosperity ; the cities were rebuilt and the fields again cultivated. The administration of justice was equally prompt and severe ; so secure did property become that it was proverbially said, "a purse of gold might be exposed on the road-side with safety." Unfortunately, Theodoric had from his infancy adopted the Arian heresy, while most of his subjects were catholics, and though he granted universal toleration, the bigotted Italians, in their zeal for orthodoxy, deemed the benefits derived from a paternal government less important than errors of faith.

The foreign policy of Theodoric was peaceful, he married the sister of Clovis, and thus cemented an alliance with the Franks ; he gave the hand of his own sister to Trasmund, king of the Vandals, and thus secured tranquillity on the side of Africa. But he did not avoid war from any dread of its consequences ; when attacked unexpectedly by the Byzantines, he promptly levied an army that made Anastasius tremble in Constantinople, and though he could not prevent the Byzantine fleet from ravaging the coasts, he successfully exerted himself to fit out a navy that would prevent the repetition of such insults.

The dominions of Clovis were at his death divided between his four sons ; they at first lived in unity, through the prudence of their mother Clotilda, at whose instigation

they resolved to overthrow the kingdom of the Burgundians. Theodoric was the ally of the Frank princes ; and without taking any active share in the war, he contrived to obtain a large portion of its conquests. His army delayed its march until victory had decided in favour of the sons of Clovis, and then the Goths demanded and received their share of the spoils.

Learning, which had long been extinct, revived under the wise government of Theodoric ; Boëthius, the celebrated poet and philosopher, and Cassiodorus, scarcely less distinguished as an orator and historian, flourished in his reign. With literature also the love of freedom revived, and, unfortunately, Boëthius could not hide his wish to see Italy delivered from Gothic bondage. He was accused of treason, immured in a dungeon, and after a long period of suspense, put to death by torture. His father-in-law, Symmachus, a venerable and beloved senator, was involved in his fate ; his excessive grief for the loss of Boëthius was represented as a participation in his crime, and he was dragged in chains from Rome to Ravenna, where he was delivered to the executioner. But this cruelty was fatal to the future peace of Theodoric ; the gory form of his victim was constantly present to his imagination ; unavailing grief and late repentance brought on a dysentery, of which he died, thirty-six years after his entrance into Italy. His dominions were divided between his two grandsons ; Amalaric inheriting the throne of Spain, and the south of Gaul, as far as the Rhone ; Athalaric receiving all the other provinces.

The division of Gaul between the four sons of Clovis has been already mentioned ; as might have been expected, this partition of the kingdom soon led to sanguinary feuds. The first of the brothers that died was Clodomer *, who left his three sons to the guardianship of their mother

* Hhlodo mer, " a celebrated chieftain."

Clotilda. Chilbert* and Clothaire† combined against their nephews, murdered two of them, and forced the third to receive the clerical tonsure, by which he was doomed to a life of celibacy. Ten years after they menaced with a similar fate Theodobert‡, the son of the fourth brother Theodoric; but the youthful prince defeated their machinations, and not only preserved his hereditary dominions, but enlarged them by the conquest of several provinces. He was the most warlike of all the descendants of Clovis, and was also distinguished for the prudent administration of his domestic government. His Italian wars, and the alarms which he excited in the court of Constantinople, will be noticed in the next chapter; here we need only say, that by obtaining the cession of Provence from the Byzantine emperors, he completed the establishment of the Frankish supremacy over all Gaul. Theodobert was succeeded by a sickly son, who sunk early into the grave; and as Chilbert died without issue, the entire Frankish monarchy was once more united under Clothaire.

CHAPTER IX.

The reign of Justinian.

(From A.D. 518. to A.D. 565.)

THE emperor Anastasius was equally amiable and feeble; he had to encounter the seditions of the Byzantines, the interminable disputes of the eastern clergy, and the continued hostility of the Persians; overwhelmed by such complicated anxieties, he had rarely time to attend to the troubled politics of the western empire. It is indeed probable that Ko'bad, king of Persia, would have subdued all western Asia, had he not displeased his subjects by embracing the tenets of the impostor Mazdak.

* Hilde berth, "a brilliant warrior."

† Hhlod her, "celebrated and excellent."

‡ Theode bert, "very celebrated among the people."

Ko'bad had been trained in the school of adversity. On the accession of his brother Palasch, he had been forced to seek shelter in a foreign land ; in his flight he became acquainted with a lady of noble birth, by whom he had a son, the celebrated Nushirva'n ; the boy was introduced to his father on the very day that news arrived of the death of Palasch, and the recognition of Ko'bad's right to the crown by the Persian nobles, a circumstance that was naturally deemed ominous of Nushirva'n's future greatness. In the tenth year of Ko'bad's reign, the impostor Mazdak began to preach his pernicious doctrines ; the most alluring tenet of his creed was the community of wives and property, a doctrine so popular that it brought him a multitude of converts. Mirkhond informs us that Ko'bad was won to favour this new religion by a pretended miracle. Mazdak concealed an associate behind the altar of one of the fire-temples, and in the presence of the king affected to converse with the sacred flame. Ko'bad was so much the dupe of this simple artifice, that he embraced the creed of Mazdak, and steadily adhered to it through life. But the dangerous principles taught by Mazdak, introduced anarchy into the bosom of every family in Persia ; the nobles, enraged at the progress of corruption took up arms, and Ko'bad was driven from the throne. He was, however, soon restored ; and to divert the attention of his subjects from his heresy, he engaged them in a war with the Byzantine empire. The Byzantines had erected a strong fortress called Dara, in Mesopotamia, which for sixty years resisted the repeated sieges of the Persians ; but this is not a proof of its great utility, for the erection of Dara provoked those attacks which ruined all the cities in its neighbourhood. Anastasius, too, trusted entirely to this bulwark, and allowed the Persians to pillage the open country with impunity.

The nephews of Anastasius had been raised to the highest dignities, with the hope that one of them should succeed to the empire ; but their personal characters gained

them so little consideration, that on the death of their uncle, (A.D. 528.) not a single voice was raised in their favour. Amantius, an eunuch that had been the prime minister in the late reign, resolved to retain his power, by procuring the elevation of one of his own creatures, named Theocritus, and gave a large sum of money to Justin, captain of the imperial guard, to purchase the votes of his soldiers and the people. Justin applied the money to secure suffrages for himself, and was proclaimed emperor before Amantius had any suspicion of his designs.

Justin, who had thus purchased the throne with his rival's treasures, was one of three Bulgarian peasants, who, in the reign of Leo, forsook their farms to seek their fortunes at Constantinople. Their strength and stature easily procured them admittance into the imperial guard; Justin's bravery rapidly procured him promotion, and he finally became a general, a senator, a count of the empire, and commander of the guards. His want of even the rudiments of learning might have exposed him to some difficulties, had he not been aided by his nephew Justinian, who had been educated at Constantinople, and had from his earliest youth displayed eminent literary abilities. The new emperor was attached to the orthodox faith, but under the pretence of punishing heresy, he frequently attacked those whom their power and ambition rendered formidable. His first victims were Amantius and Theocritus, whom he had so craftily cheated: they were accused of Manichæism (a name given to every doctrine which it was desirable to render unpopular), and after the mockery of a trial sentenced to an ignominious death. Vitalian, a Gothic chief, who had been raised to the dignity of the consulate, fell by still more unworthy means; his orthodoxy was undoubted, so great indeed was his attachment to the catholic faith, and his consequent influence over the clergy, that the reconciliation which at this time took place between the Eastern and Western Churches was chiefly owing to his exertions.

He was also distinguished as a warrior and a statesman, and he commanded a body of faithful followers in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, zealously attached to his service. Justinian, dreading such a formidable rival, invited him into the city, and to remove all suspicion, swore fraternal friendship to him on the consecrated elements of the sacrament, of which they partook together. Vitalian, trusting to such a solemn pledge, quitted the camp, and came to Constantinople, where he was soon murdered by hired assassins. The emperor did not directly sanction his nephew's treachery, but he screened him from the punishment he merited.

Having by this monstrous crime removed the object of his fears, Justinian exerted himself with renewed diligence to gain popularity; he declared himself the patron of the blue faction of the circus, which appears to have been the most powerful at the time, and when the excesses of his partisans had excited public clamour, he regained the favour of the citizens by exhibiting the most splendid games that had ever been witnessed at Constantinople. But while the Byzantines were thus devoted to mere amusements, the eastern provinces of the empire were harassed by cruel wars; Ko'bad, though opposed by Belisarius, a general rapidly rising into eminence, gained several important acquisitions in the Caucasian provinces; and the Saracens^{*} made frequent incursions into southern Syria. Arabia was even now beginning to rise into political im-

¹ The name of Saracens first became formidable in the East about the time of the emperor Julian. It was applied by the Syrians to the north-eastern Arabs, and appears to be derived from *Sharki* which signifies Eastern. Thus the Danes who invaded Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries were called Ostmen, or Eastmen, in Ireland, and Northmen, or Normans, in France, in reference to the direction from which they came. Some writers derive the name from *Sarikin*, "robbers," others from *Sarrag*, "a horseman." Baron de Sacy justly remarks that the last etymology is untenable, for *Sarrag* properly signifies a saddler.

portance : some of the tribes had embraced Judaism, and others Christianity ; the latter were supported both by Justin and the king of Ethiopia, who crossed the Red Sea, and established his supremacy over the southern part of the Arabic peninsula. The progress of the Christian religion in Arabia was favourable to the interests of the Byzantines, for those who professed it became anxious to support the emperors of Constantinople in their wars against the Fire-worshippers of Persia.

Justin had exhausted all his energies in attaining empire ; he soon found the cares of state a burden too heavy either for his physical or mental constitution, and yielding to the remonstrances of the generals and senators, he invested Justinian with the imperial purple as his colleague. The emperor did not survive this ceremony more than four months ; he died from the effects of an old wound which had been badly healed, and which the luxury and indolence of imperial state inflamed to such a degree that mortification ensued.

Justinian began his reign by an act which is rarely to be paralleled in the history of eastern Europe ; he exhibited his queen as an associate in the government, and during the greater part of his reign permitted her to take a prominent share in the administration of the empire. Theodora, the empress who possessed most real power during the existence of the Byzantine empire, had been originally an actress of no very creditable character ; in fact, she had become proverbial for profligacy even in an age when modesty was little regarded ; all the nobles of Constantinople had been opposed to her marriage with the heir of the crown ; the emperor Justin long refused it his sanction ; but Justinian's passion finally prevailed, and as if in defiance of former opposition he placed her name with his own in the oath of allegiance imposed upon all who took office. Theodora did not bear her honours gracefully ; she sometimes disgusted the nobles by her excessive pride, and at other

times provoked ridicule, or even severer censure, by seeking the company of her old associates when on the stage.

Justinian had a great taste, or rather passion for architecture ; he rebuilt several cities which had fallen into decay, and among others the celebrated Tadmor, or Palmyra, which he designed to be a garrison for restraining the incursions of the Saracens. An unwise system of persecution encouraged both the Saracens and Persians to persevere in their hostility to the Byzantine empire, for they found strenuous partisans in every province. The Jews, the Samaritans, Christian heretics, and Pagans, being deprived of their civil rights by the imperial edicts, sought secret assistance from the Persian king, and from the Arabian chiefs. Of these insurgents the Samaritans were the most formidable. When an attempt was made to close their synagogues, they had recourse to arms, and maintained a desperate struggle against the imperial forces. They were finally subdued, but not until the fury of civil war had rendered southern Syria almost a desert.

Belisarius conducted the Persian war with ability rather than success ; his officers were mutinous, his soldiers discontented with the service, and his actions misrepresented by the courtiers at Constantinople ; but notwithstanding all these disadvantages he made such a vigorous defence that Ko'bad's generals were unable to make any permanent acquisition, and vexation at his repeated disappointments is supposed to have hastened the death of the Persian monarch. Chosroes, or as he is called by Oriental writers Nushirva'n, succeeded to the throne, the greatest monarch Persia had seen since the days of Cyrus. He began his reign by destroying Mazdak and his followers, and then sold peace to Justinian at an enormous price.

But scarcely had external tranquillity been thus disgracefully purchased when a fierce sedition at Constantinople (A.D. 532) threatened the total ruin of the empire. The origin of the insurrection was the favour shown by Justinian to the blue faction of the circus. At one of the pub-

lic exhibitions of games, the populace began to exclaim against the emperor's partiality, and seditious cries were uttered by the leaders of the green party. The blues upon this attacked their adversaries, and drove them from the amphitheatre, but the rabble in the city joined the green faction, and battles were fought in every street of Constantinople. During this excitement, seven assassins of both factions were led out to execution; four were beheaded, a fifth was hanged; but when the remaining two were about to suffer the same punishment, the ropes broke; they were rescued by the populace, and some turbulent monks, who placed the criminals in sanctuary. It happened that one of these belonged to the green and the other to the blue party; this induced both factions to combine against the government: they raised the war cry *NIKA* (*conquer*), and set fire to the palaces of the ministers. The conflagration spread rapidly, the fury of the populace increased every moment, and Justinian was about to seek safety in flight, had he not been prevented by the spirited counsels of the empress Theodora. The blues, who had long felt the benefit of the emperor's patronage, were soon induced to return to their allegiance; and the greens, thus deserted, were attacked by the imperial guards under the command of Belisarius, in the narrow and ruinous streets where they were crowded. A frightful massacre ensued; thirty thousand citizens are said to have fallen in the promiscuous carnage; and several nobles of high rank, including the nephews of the emperor Anastasius, were executed in prison.

It is a relief to turn from these scenes of murder, in order to mark an interesting era in the progress of the useful arts, the introduction of silk-worms and the silk manufacture into Europe. The Persians had long enjoyed the monopoly of the silk trade; the raw material could only be procured in China, whence it was brought across the deserts of Tartary by caravans. Justinian at first tried to

open a new route of trade with Eastern Asia by the Red Sea, through the Ethiopians, or Abyssinians, who since their conversion to Christianity had been reckoned among the allies of the empire. The Abyssinians however, derived too much profit from the African trade to engage in a new branch of commerce, and besides the navigation of the Red Sea, which even at the present day presents very formidable obstacles *, must in that age have been all but impossible. Chance however afforded the emperor a more effectual means of accomplishing his object. Two Persian monks who had penetrated into the interior of China, made themselves acquainted with the whole process of rearing the worms, preparing the silk, and perpetuating the stock. They then stole some of the eggs, which they concealed in a hollow cane, and brought their precious treasure in safety to Constantinople. The worms propagated so rapidly, that in the course of a single generation the silk produced in Thrace was superior to that imported from China.

One of the principal motives that had induced Justinian to purchase peace from Nushirva'n, was the favourable prospect that the state of the Vandal kingdom in Africa opened to the re-establishment of the imperial power over its fertile provinces. Gelimer had been raised to the throne of the Vandals by the Arians, who were enraged at the favour shown to the Catholics by their legitimate sovereign. Religion and policy combined to influence Justinian in punishing the usurper, and he had the good fortune to entrust the expedition to a general worthy to be ranked with the heroes of antiquity. The services of Belisarius in the Persian war have already been mentioned, but he probably owed his elevation less to his merits, than to the

* "There are six months in the year you cannot get into it, and six more that you cannot get out of it." See *Jones's Evidence before Committee on Steam Navigation with India.*

intrigues of his wife Antonina, who possessed considerable influence over the empress, and had been, like her, elevated to rank and station from the most degraded rank of life. The history of his exploits has been written by his secretary Procopius, who seems greatly to have exaggerated the vices both of Theodora and Antonina. His "*Anecdotes*" is one of the most atrocious libels that ever has been published, and malice and falsehood are so clear in every sentence of the work, that no reliance can be placed upon its statements.

The preparations for the African expedition were on the most extensive scale, and tried very severely the finances of the empire. The soldiers and sailors, amounting to thirty-five thousand men, assembled at Constantinople, and a fleet was prepared by the artificers of Europe and Asia. About the middle of summer every thing was ready, and the expedition sailed from the harbour (A.D. 533) amidst the acclamations and blessings of a multitude on both sides of the straits. After a prosperous voyage, Belisarius landed in Africa, and marched in search of the enemy, having strictly enjoined his followers to avoid pillage. He soon encountered the brother and nephew of Gelimer, over whom he obtained a decisive victory. Scarcely had the contest been decided, when the Vandal king reached the field of action, and made an ineffectual attempt to retrieve the fortune of the day; but he was completely defeated, and so terrified by his loss, that he fled to the confines of Numidia. Belisarius advanced to Carthage, which Gelimer had left undefended, and was received by the inhabitants, of whom the majority were Catholics, as their liberator from Vandal tyranny, and Arian persecution. Gelimer in the mean time addressed himself to the Moors and Numidians, who soon flocked to his standard; and recalled his brother from Sardinia at the moment that he had completed the conquest of the island. Having thus collected an immense army, he advanced and blockaded Carthage; but Belisarius, though his numbers were far

inferior to the enemy, boldly resolved to hazard a battle, and led his forces into the open plain. The Vandals eagerly hasted to engage, but the fall of Gelimer's brother in the very first onset, so discouraged them that they fell into confusion ; and Belisarius, with the loss of only fifty men, obtained a victory that decided the fate of Africa. Gelimer fled to the mountains ; his secretary Boniface after an ineffectual attempt to escape by sea, delivered up the royal treasures to the conquerors, and not only the Vandal dominions in Africa, but the islands in the western Mediterranean, submitted to the imperial authority without any farther struggle. Gelimer was closely pursued, his place of refuge in the mountains was surrounded, but its strength defeated every effort to carry it by storm. Cold and hunger were, however, enemies more dreadful than any other adversaries, and the unfortunate king, after having seen a great part of his family perish by famine, yielded himself a prisoner. Belisarius received the royal captive with the respect due to his former rank, and resolved to accompany him to Constantinople, where he learned that the envious courtiers were plotting his destruction.

The arrival of Belisarius silenced his enemies ; he entered the city in triumph ; and the spoils which Genseric had taken from Rome adorned the procession of the conqueror of the Vandals. No part of these attracted so much attention as the vases that had once belonged to the Temple of Jerusalem, and had successively graced the triumphs of Titus, of Genseric, and of Belisarius. A Jew, who witnessed the spectacle, when he beheld these memorials of his nation, could not avoid exclaiming, " Keep not these treasures in the palace of Constantinople ; Providence has ordained that they should be preserved safely only in the Holy City, where they were placed by Solomon. The sacrilegious removal of them was the cause of the sack of Rome, and of the destruction that has fallen upon the palaces of the Vandal kings." These observations were repeated to Justinian, and produced such an effect on his

mind, that he sent all these vessels to be distributed among the churches of Jerusalem.

Nushirva'n heard of Justinian's success with any thing but pleasure. Notwithstanding, he sent ambassadors to congratulate the emperor on his success, and to make a half-jocular, half-earnest, claim to a share of the spoils, on the ground that only for the peace with Persia, Justinian could have sent any forces into Africa. The Byzantines acknowledged the validity of the argument, and a large sum was sent as a present to the Persian monarch.

Great as was the glory which Justinian derived from the conquest of Africa, it was far inferior to the honourable fame obtained from his celebrated code of laws. In the beginning of his reign, he formed the noble project of digesting into an uniform system, the infinite number of laws, regulations, precedents, and judicial maxims, that had been produced by the necessities, interests, and follies of men, during thirteen hundred years. The first part of this great work was to arrange the imperial laws, classifying them according to their subjects; suppressing those which were contradictory, or had fallen into disuse, and adding explanations where necessary. This work, called the Code, was completed under the superintendence of Tribonian, a lawyer, more remarkable for ability than integrity; it contained, in twelve books, all the laws from the time of the emperor Adrian. The next and most important work, was the Digest of all the judicial maxims that had guided the decisions of the Roman tribunals, from the earliest period. This great work, generally called the Pandects*, is contained in fifty books, divided into four hundred and twenty-two titles, under which are classed nine thousand one hundred and twenty-three laws. It was long the great source of judicial regulation throughout Europe, and is still the chief authority of our Civil Law. The Institutes

* So named because it contains all the maxims of ancient jurisprudence, from *πᾶν* all, and *δέχεσθαι* to receive.

were next prepared; they were designed to be a summary of the elements of jurisprudence, which might serve as an introduction to the Code and the Pandects; this part of the work was far the most ably executed, and was on its publication invested with the full force of imperial law. Justinian reserved to himself the privilege of adding new institutions, explaining or amending the Code, whenever circumstances rendered them necessary. These laws were called *Novels*; one hundred and sixty-eight of them were published; unfortunately, there is too much reason to believe, that many of them were dictated by self-interest or caprice, rather than reason and equity.

Africa had not been long reduced under the imperial government, when a favourable opportunity presented itself for the recovery of Italy. To understand the causes of this war, we must cast a glance at the history of the Gothic kingdom in the peninsula, after the death of Theodoric. This great monarch had but one child, a daughter named Amalasontha; precluded by her sex from ascending the throne, she sought out the nearest male heir of the royal line, Eutharic, who had previously lived in obscurity, gave him her hand in marriage, and procured his election to the sovereignty. Eutharic did not long enjoy his elevation; and, on his death, the crown devolved on his son Athalaric. Amalasontha acted as regent during her son's minority, and in her vigorous administration revived the memory of her illustrious father: the monarchy of the Goths remained tranquil at home, and respected abroad. Until Athalaric had reached the age of seventeen, she was as strict as well as a tender mother; and the young prince frequently complained of the severity with which she restrained his pleasures. Some of the factious courtiers persuaded Athalaric to rebel against his mother's authority, and Amalasontha soon felt that the reins of government were slipping from her hands; she was publicly insulted by her son, and neglected by the courtiers. But Athalaric

resigned himself wholly to the wildest debauchery; the principal instigators of his disobedience were privately put to death, and a disease produced by his vicious excesses brought him to an early grave. Amalasontha was unwilling to resign the pleasures of power; she therefore chose as her second husband, and the successor of her son, Theodatus, whose chief recommendation was his notorious incapacity. Amalasontha soon learned that it is more difficult to guard against the cunning of a weak mind, than to govern a strong intellect by the arts of persuasion. She was arrested by the orders of her perfidious husband, when totally unprepared for such an attempt, hurried to a distant prison, and secretly murdered.

Justinian had been closely allied with Amalasontha, whose vigorous administration justly entitled her to his respect; he resolved to punish her murderer, and, at the same time, to unite Italy once more to the empire. Two armies were prepared; one to march overland through Dalmatia, the other to proceed by sea to Sicily, and southern Italy. The command of the latter was entrusted to Belisarius; it consisted of only seven thousand five hundred men, but these were the flower of the imperial armies. When every thing was ready, the expedition sailed to the coast of Sicily (A.D 535); and the conquest of that important island was completed in a few weeks almost without resistance. Theodatus, justly alarmed, sent ambassadors to Justinian, soliciting peace on any conditions, however humiliating; and even offered to resign Italy, if an annual pension were secured to him. Scarcely, however, had the proposals been accepted, when the news of a victory obtained by the Goths in Dalmatia revived his courage, and he refused to ratify his agreement. Belisarius was delayed a short time from punishing this perfidy by an insurrection of the Moors and Arian heretics in Africa, which threatened the safety of that province; having restored tranquillity more by the terror of his name than

the force of his arms, he returned to Sicily, and transported his armies across the strait to Rhegium. Naples was the first city that offered any resistance to the imperial forces; the siege continued so long, that Belisarius dreading the approach of winter, was about to withdraw his army, when an Isaurian soldier discovered an entrance into the city through the channel of a ruined aqueduct. To distract the attention of the garrison, the fleet attacked the city from the sea, and the army menaced different parts of the walls with escalade; the Neapolitans made a desperate resistance, until they were attacked in the rear by those who had found a passage through the aqueduct, when they fled from their posts, and the gates being thrown open, the entire army of the besiegers rushed in and began to plunder. Belisarius successfully exerted himself to restrain the passions of his followers, and before night the city was as tranquil as if war had never approached its walls. The Goths, enraged at such a calamity, deposed Theodatus, and elected his general Vitiges their monarch. Theodatus attempted to make his escape, but he was pursued and overtaken by an officer whom he had unjustly punished, and was put to death.

Vitiges began his reign by declaring his intention of treading in the steps of the great Theodoric; he repudiated his wife, and compelled Matasontha, the daughter of Amalasontha, to become his queen. He then assembled his forces near Ravenna, and resigned to the Franks the provinces that the Goths had hitherto retained in Gaul. Belisarius in the mean time completed the conquest of southern Italy, and advancing to Rome was received by the citizens as their deliverer.

During the ensuing winter, Vitiges vainly endeavoured to obtain terms of peace from Justinian, but finding that the emperor was resolved on acquiring Italy, he made the most vigorous preparations for the defence of his kingdom. Early in the spring he advanced towards Rome, which

Belisarius had in the mean time strongly fortified with an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men. The cowardice of the party posted to defend the Melvian bridge enabled the Goths to effect their passage over the Tiber, and to surprise Belisarius, who had come out to reconnoitre with only a thousand followers. But skill and valour compensated for the disproportion of the imperial army; after a contest which lasted from dawn to the approach of night, the Goths were repulsed with loss, and Belisarius entered the city again in triumph. Though Vitiges was thus foiled, yet relying on the vast superiority of his forces he closely invested the city, and prepared engines for battering the walls. On the eighteenth day of the siege a furious assault was made, and supported with unabated vigour for several hours; but Belisarius repulsed them at all points, and following up his success drove them to their trenches and burned their engines. Great as this victory was, it did not relieve the imperial army from its difficulties; the Goths held the city closely blockaded, and trusted to the slow operation of famine; Belisarius therefore wrote pressing letters to Justinian for assistance, and in the mean time harassed the enemy by frequent sallies. The Huns and Moors in the imperial army were better horsemen than the Goths; they were accustomed like the Parthians to aim their arrows while advancing or retreating at full gallop, while the Gothic archers always remained stationary, and thus afforded a fixed mark to their enemies. In consequence of this disadvantage, Vitiges lost so many men in skirmishes, that he resolved, though superior in the field, to solicit peace. Belisarius granted him a truce until an answer could be received from Constantinople, and in the mean time provisioned Rome, and effected a junction with the fresh forces sent him by the emperor. Vitiges soon discovered that the truce was ruinous to his interests; every day brought fresh battalions and convoys to the enemy, while the Goths, weary of delay, began to

desert; he therefore made a fresh attempt to carry Rome by assault, and was defeated with great loss. His soldiers were now completely disheartened; they compelled him to burn his camp and retire from the walls, after having wasted a year and nine days in his fruitless siege.

The imperial forces were soon after strengthened by the arrival of a body of Heruli, under the eunuch Narses, who, though he had never received a military education, soon rivalled the fame of the most experienced generals. Narses was at first inclined to insist upon an independent command, but the firmness of Belisarius prevented this dangerous division, and the united forces marched to Ariminum, which Vitiges held closely besieged. On the approach of the imperial armies, the Goths abandoned their camp with great precipitation, and suffered severely in their flight. The jealousy of Narses prevented Belisarius from following up this success as effectively as he desired, but the eunuch was at length recalled, and the conquest of Italy thenceforward advanced rapidly. Vitiges, dreading that his capital Ravenna would soon be besieged, sent an embassy to Chosroes, or Nushirva'n, the celebrated king of Persia, urging him to attack the empire in the east, and not permit Justinian to acquire the dominion of the Cæsars. Chosroes, already urged to war by the Armenians, who had been cruelly treated by the court of Constantinople, replied by exhorting Vitiges to continue the defence of Italy, promising to make a speedy diversion in his favour.

Theodobert *, king of the Franks, took advantage of the war to invade Italy. The Goths were at first delighted at their approach, believing that they came as allies, but they were soon undeceived, for Theodebert, after having been admitted into Pavia, cruelly massacred the innocent citizens who had come to gaze at the strangers. Northern Italy was devastated by these barbarians, who were enemies

* Theodebert, "Brilliant among the people."

alike to the Greeks and Goths, but their devastations finally became destructive to themselves; they were attacked by disease and famine in the land they had desolated, and were forced to return home, rich indeed in plunder, but deprived by premature death of their bravest warriors.

Belisarius having intercepted the Gothic ambassadors on their return from Persia, became anxious to finish the Italian war, and urged on his enterprises with so much vigour, that Vitiges was reduced to the utmost extremity. The Goths in despair resolved to dethrone their king, and offer his crown to Belisarius; but the general was true to his allegiance, and declared that he had only conquered Italy for his sovereign. Justinian however having heard a prejudiced account of this offer from some spies of the court that accompanied the Italian army, recalled Belisarius to Constantinople. The loyal general immediately obeyed the summons, bringing with him Vitiges as a prisoner, and the accumulated treasures of the Gothic monarchs. Justinian, yielding to the insinuations of envious courtiers, refused Belisarius the honours of a triumphal entry, but the respect shown to the conqueror of Italy by every class of the community amply compensated the hero for his master's injustice.

The Persian war had languished during the absence of Belisarius in Italy; the generals opposed to Nushirva'n possessed neither skill nor courage, they fled before the Persians, and allowed Syria to be ravaged without interruption. This province had long been free from the horrors of war, the Persians generally crossing the upper Euphrates and directing their attacks against Roman Armenia; but Nushirva'n crossed the Euphrates below Ctesiphon, and led his army into a country enriched by continued peace. (A.D. 450.) City after city was subdued, and rescued from total ruin only by the payment of an enormous ransom. Trusting to the strength of their

walls, the number of their garrison, and the imperial promise of speedy relief, the citizens of Antioch not only refused a capitulation, but loaded Nushirva'n with contumely and insult. The Persian monarch, filled with rage, gave immediate orders for an assault; the mercenaries that composed the garrison fled at the first onset, and Antioch was seized by a host that knew not the name of pity. It is impossible to describe the horrors perpetrated in Antioch; suffice it to say, that the city was utterly ruined, and the few surviving inhabitants dragged captive to Persia, where they were subsequently located in a new Antioch, erected by the conqueror to perpetuate the memory of his success. The Asiatic provinces would have been utterly lost, had not Belisarius been sent to check the progress of the Persians. By a series of skilful manœuvres he compelled Nushirva'n to retire beyond the Euphrates, and he thus liberated Syria, without encountering the hazard of a battle. Unfortunately, during these campaigns he was severely harassed by the criminal intrigues of his wife, whose profligacy was sanctioned by the empress Theodora; and the general who never dreaded an enemy in the field, was the willing dupe, or rather the degraded slave of two infamous women, whose crimes he too well knew, but whose vengeance he meanly dreaded.

There are but few points on which European and Oriental historians differ so much as on the character of Chosroes, or Nushirva'n. By the former he is described as the most cruel and bloodthirsty of tyrants, while the latter describe him as the most virtuous and just of monarchs. The glories of his reign probably have dazzled the Asiatic writers: Persia might well be proud of a monarch whose dominions at one time extended from the shores of the Mediterranean to the banks of the Indus, from the Red Sea to the Caspian, and from the Euxine to the Jaxartes. The days of Cyrus seemed to have returned when the princes of India, and the ruler of China, sent presents to purchase the friendship of a Persian king, while the

emperor of Constantinople paid him an annual tribute. Nushirva'n's patronage of learning also atoned with historians for many defects in his character: so celebrated was he for protecting literature, that seven heathen philosophers of Athens, who were persecuted by Justinian, sought an asylum in Persia, believing that the country ruled by so magnificent a sovereign must be a perfect Paradise. Finally, the strict administration of justice, which Nushirva'n enforced both by precept and example, may well account for the admiration of his character in a land where equitable government is so rare. "I one day," he used to say, "when a youth, saw a man on foot throw a stone at a dog and break the animal's leg; a moment afterwards a horse passed, and with a kick broke the man's leg; and this animal had only galloped a short distance, when its foot sunk into a hole, and its leg was broken. I gazed with wonder and awe, and have since feared to commit injustice." But it was not simply by an apologue that Nushirva'n shewed his love of equity; an ambassador from Constantinople, while admiring the beautiful prospect from the windows of the royal palace, remarked that a portion of the ground was uneven, and asked why it was not rendered uniform. "It belongs to an aged woman," said a Persian noble, "who is unwilling to sell it, though she has been often requested to do so by our monarch, and he is willing to have his prospect spoiled, rather than be guilty of injustice." "That irregular spot," said the ambassador, "consecrated as it is by justice, appears more beautiful than all the surrounding scene." Nushirva'n during his life was the terror of the Eastern empire, but with him ended the glory of the Sassanides. His successors, luxurious and feeble, were unable to protect the territories he had acquired, and the vanquished nations took advantage of their incompetency to revenge the wrongs they had endured.

The empire which the valour of Belisarius had won for

his master, in Africa and Italy, could only be preserved by equity and wisdom ; unfortunately the provincial governors chosen by the Byzantine court possessed neither qualification, and a new series of wars and confusion resulted from their misconduct. Africa was devastated by insurgent Vandals, whom oppression had reduced to want and despair, by Arians, whom persecution had exasperated, and by Moors, who imitated the perfidy and cruelty of the Byzantines. In the course of twenty years the African provinces, once so celebrated for wealth, fertility, and population, were reduced almost to a desert ; the merchants fled to foreign lands, corn was obliged to be imported to support the garrisons, and a traveller might wander whole days through ruined towns and villages, without meeting a single human being. It is calculated that five millions perished during the wars of Justinian, or under the oppression of his governors ; and all that was purchased by such a waste of life was a narrow strip along the sea coast, exposed to the ravages of barbarous tribes.

Justinian had recalled Belisarius before the whole of Italy was subdued, and had permitted the Goths to retain a qualified independence in the provinces north of the Po ; thus leaving his new conquest exposed to a warlike enemy, whom defeat had enraged rather than terrified. Hildebald, the successor of Vitiges, eagerly watched for some opportunity of re-establishing the power of his nation, and soon found one, in the discontent produced by Byzantine oppression. Alexander, the imperial officer chosen to administer the finances of Italy, filled the whole peninsula with discontent by his insolence and rapacity : the Italians began to murmur, and when Hildebald raised the standard of revolt, recruits flocked to him from every quarter. A temporary respite was afforded to the empire by the death of Hildebald, who fell a victim to the just vengeance of one of his officers, and by the incapacity of his successor Eraric ; but the Goths having removed the

latter chose the valiant Totila* for their sovereign, who with only five thousand followers boldly undertook the restoration of his nation's supremacy over Italy.

Totila advancing southwards twice defeated the imperial armies in the Florentine territory, and then, to the great surprise of his enemies, leaving their forces in his rear, pushed through the heart of Italy, and laid siege to Naples. The emperor, alarmed by the intelligence of this new war, sent a powerful armament to protect Italy, under the command of Maximin, one of his unworthy favourites. Maximin halted in Sicily, but sent a squadron to relieve Naples. The Byzantine ships had scarcely reached the harbour when they were driven on shore near the Gothic camp by a violent storm, and the greater part destroyed or taken by the enemy. The Neapolitans, who saw this overthrow of their hopes from the walls, requested a truce, on condition of surrendering unless relieved within thirty days. Totila extended the time to three months, knowing that famine would force the garrison to a more speedy capitulation. Nor was he disappointed : Naples opened its gates before one month had expired, and its surrender was followed by the conquest of the greater part of Campania. The strict discipline which he enforced, the forbearance he displayed to his enemies, and the protection he extended to the husbandmen in the conquered countries, reconciled the Italians to his government, and induced many of the senators to favour his designs. He was advancing to besiege Rome, when he learned that Belisarius with a small train had arrived at Ravenna, to take the command of the imperial forces.

Belisarius, summoned from the Persian to the Italian war, obeyed with reluctance ; through the malice of his enemies, seconded by the jealousy of the emperor, he

* He was also called Baduilla, as appears from his coins : the name signifies "immortal."

received very scanty supplies of troops and munitions of war, and was consequently unable to meet Totila in the field. The Goth thus left at liberty to pursue his victorious career, at length appeared before Rome. Belisarius made the most vigorous efforts to save the city; he went in person to hasten the succours promised from Constantinople, and having speedily prepared an armament, sailed round to the entrance of the Tiber. Totila had fortified the river with a strong wooden bridge, defended by towers, and fenced by chains in front; while a body of archers and slingers were posted on the banks. Belisarius led his cavalry along the public road from the port, while a flotilla of boats accompanied by fire-ships conveyed his infantry to the attack of the bridge. The fire-ships broke through the chains, and, grappling with the towers, involved them in flames; the Goths fled, the imperialists shouted victory, when at this critical moment an express arrived announcing that the garrison left at the port had made an imprudent sally, and had been severely defeated. Antonina, who had come with her husband to Italy, had been left at the port, and to save this worthless woman, Belisarius abandoned the conquest he had all but won. Vexation for this disgrace brought on a fever; he was unable to make any further efforts, and Rome remained at the mercy of Totila. The city, being abandoned by its garrison, was occupied by the Goths, (A.D. 546.) and though the persons of the inhabitants were spared, all their treasures were pillaged by the conquerors. Totila retired to Lucania laden with spoil, and Belisarius taking advantage of his absence, recovered Rome by a hasty march, and before the Goths could return, repaired its fortifications. But this was the last great achievement of the heroic general; being badly supported from home, he was forced to maintain a desultory war instead of a regular campaign. He went into Lucania, whose inhabitants, inflamed by religious zeal, had thrown off the Gothic yoke; but the passes of the province were

lost by the treachery or incapacity of his lieutenants, and he had great difficulty in making his escape into Sicily. He undertook an expedition from the island to aid the Lucanians, but having twice failed, he implored to be recalled, and Justinian complied with his request. Thenceforward the conqueror of Italy remained the degraded slave of his abandoned wife, not only tolerating but assenting to her vicious excesses.

After the departure of Belisarius, Totila hastened to besiege Rome a second time; the inhabitants prepared to make a vigorous defence, but the city was betrayed by some Isaurians in the garrison, and the Goths again occupied the Capitol. The principal fortresses that the Byzantines retained were soon after yielded up; Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia, followed the example of Italy, and a Gothic fleet insulted and plundered the coast of Epirus.

Justinian was, at length, roused from his indolence by the entreaties of Pope Vigilius, who earnestly besought him to deliver Italy from the Arian Goths. An armament, prepared for this purpose, was entrusted to the emperor's nephew Germanus; and, on his premature death, Narses was appointed to the chief command. (A.D. 551.) The way to Italy was opened to the new general by the defeat of the Gothic navy, and the re-establishment of the imperial power in Sicily.

Before entering on the history of the second Italian war, it is necessary to direct our attention to the northern parts of Europe and Asia, where the movements of various nations threatened dangers to the empire. It was during Justinian's reign, that the existence of the Turkish nation first became known in Europe. According to the Chinese historians, the Turks were originally a branch of the Huns who had been subdued by the Jui-jen (Eastern Tartars), and forced to work in the iron mines of the Imaüs, for the benefit of their conquerors. After a long period of

subjection, they recovered their liberty, and forced the Jui-jen to retire westwards; they next attacked and conquered the Igurs, a remnant of whom united with the former tribe, and falsely assuming the formidable name of Avars, followed the course of the Volga to the confines of the Roman empire. Justinian readily entered into alliance with the pretended Avars, and encouraged them to attack the barbarians of Poland and Germany. Having thus provided employment for his enemies on the north-eastern frontiers, Justinian viewed the progress of the Avars without jealousy, until he learned accidentally that they designed, after completing the conquest of the Germanic tribes, to assail the empire. This intelligence induced him to receive an embassy from the Turks, and to send an officer to conclude an alliance with the chieftain of these new hordes. The Byzantines and Turks were both enemies of the Persians, and this community of hatred long kept them in amity.

When Belisarius invaded Italy, the Goths quitted their ancient possessions in Pannonia to defend the Peninsula; and the Gepidæ, who had occupied the Transylvanian hills since the death of Attila, descended into the vacant plains. Justinian, unable to chastise their insolence, sought alliance with a new and formidable German tribe called the Long Barts, from the length of their barts or pikes. The Longbarts, or, as they were more generally called, the Lombards, passed the Danube; and, in the course of a long war, broke the power of the Gepidæ, almost extirpated the nation, and became more formidable to Justinian than the enemies he had invited them to destroy. The Scлавonians and Bulgarians, who roamed in a nomade state over Russia and Poland, frequently purchased from the Gepidæ liberty to invade the empire; and laid waste not only the northern provinces, but even the very suburbs of Constantinople. Before joining many historians in condemning Justinian for the neglect of Italy,

it is simple justice to examine whether in the exposed condition of his own dominions, he could always attend to a distant province with safety.

Narses led his army overland round the head of the Adriatic gulf, and reached Ravenna without loss ; he was accompanied by large bands of Lombards and Heruli ; and a Persian prince, driven into exile by the jealousy of Nushirva'n, with a troop of his faithful companions, swelled the number of the imperial force. Totila, at the head of a far inferior army, was forced, by the increasing desertion of the Italians, to hazard an engagement. The battle was fought in the vicinity of Rome, near the tombs of the Carthaginians, who had been cut off by Claudius Nero in the second Punic war ; as the Carthaginian general Asdrubal had been accompanied by a large body of Gallic auxiliaries, tradition had named the place " the tombs of the Gauls ;" a circumstance that has misled many writers ancient and modern. Totila placed his chief dependence on his cavalry, and commenced the engagement by a vigorous charge, which broke the Roman centre. Narses, anticipating this result, had placed two divisions of archers in his wings, which opened a heavy fire on the flanks of the Gothic squadrons, now separated from their infantry. With great loss and difficulty, Totila extricated his men, and made several fresh charges, which were all repelled. As night approached, he led his horse to a final attack on the Roman lines ; the shock was dreadful, but Narses had prepared his men to meet it ; the Goths were driven back in confusion on their infantry, and trampled down their own comrades : it was no longer a battle, but a rout ; and Totila, finding the confusion remediless, for the first time sought safety in flight. He died on the same night of his wounds, which incessant fatigue had rendered mortal.

This battle may be said to have decided the fate of Italy ; Rome was taken for the fifth time during the reign

of Justinian, and Narses laid siege to Cumæ, where Totila had placed the greater part of his treasures. Teias, the last Gothic monarch, hastened from the Alps in the depth of winter to relieve this important city. By taking an unusual route, and marching with extreme rapidity, he baffled the detachments placed to intercept him, and arrived safely on the banks of the Sarnus. Narses, recalling his detachments, took post on the opposite side of the river, and for sixty days the two armies watched each other without hazarding a battle. At length, the imperial fleet having intercepted all supplies, Teias resolved to venture his life and crown in one final struggle; he dismounted his cavalry, to show that all his soldiers should share equal danger, and attacked the Roman army then posted at the foot of mount Vesuvius, with all the energy of despair. Narses, notwithstanding the vast superiority of his forces, found it difficult to resist men for whom death had lost all its terrors; but the Goths, wearied by the constant attacks of fresh troops, began to sink under fatigue. Teias at length fell; but this, so far from discouraging his followers, only roused them to revenge his death. Night separated the combatants; but the battle was renewed on the following day with the same desperate resolution. A second night saw the contest undecided; but the Goths were completely worn out, and they surrendered to Narses on very favourable terms. Cumæ and Lucca, were the principal cities that still refused to submit to the emperor, and both sustained the horrors of a siege and blockade with memorable firmness. Before they surrendered, a new enemy appeared in Italy, and threatened to wrest from Narses the fruits of his labours and victories.

The Franks had refused to aid the Goths in their great struggle with the Empire; but when the contest was all but decided, they determined to share in the war; and, disregarding their feeble monarch, two brothers, dukes of

the Allemans, led seventy-five thousand Germans over the Rhoetian Alps into the plains of Milan. They marched with very little interruption to the very extreme of Italy, plundering the country in their march, but not venturing on the siege of any garrisoned city. During the autumn and winter, these barbarians revelled in the spoils they had collected; disease and intemperance weakened their ranks, and punished the atrocities of which they were guilty. Early in the following spring, (A.D. 554) Narses concentrated his forces, and marched to attack the remnant of the invaders on the banks of the Vulturnus. The Franks fought with their usual impetuous valour; the imperialists received them with the cool steadiness that belongs to well-trained soldiers. Narses allowed the enemy to penetrate his centre in a dense column, and then with his light troops attacking their unwieldy mass in flank and rear, threw them into complete confusion. The historians declare that only five of the Allemans escaped, and that the imperialists lost no more than eighty men; a statement that seems at least very questionable. The surrender of Compsa, the last Gothic fortress, soon after this engagement, completed the conquest of Italy, and Justinian declared with more pride than truth, that he had restored the empire of the Cæsars.

Italy, after having been sixty years a Gothic kingdom, now became a province of the Byzantine empire, governed by an Exarch, who usually resided at Ravenna. Narses, who ruled the peninsula for fifteen years, exerted himself with great diligence and success to remedy the evils which the late wars had occasioned. But it is easier to desolate than restore, and in spite of all his exertions, many portions of Italy remained waste and depopulated.

The empire fell into complete decadence during the old age of Justinian. His ministers at once plundered his subjects by laying heavy taxes, and cheated the soldiers by defrauding them of their pay. The attacks of the

barbarians were averted either by paying a disgraceful tribute, or by bribing other barbarians to engage them in war at home. The imperial armies were formidable to every one but the enemy, and the fortresses erected to defend the frontiers were left without garrisons. In this state of things, a body of Huns called Cutrigurs, who have been improperly confounded with the Slavonians and Bulgarians, jealous of the presents that Justinian had made to a rival tribe, crossed the lower Danube on the ice, under the command of their king Zabergan, and burst like a torrent upon Thrace. There was no opposition to the invaders; the long wall erected to defend the Chersonesus had been allowed to fall into ruin, its garrison was withdrawn, and Zabergan passing through the breaches, encamped within about two miles of Constantinople. Alarm and consternation filled the city; Justinian, more terrified than any body else, ordered the sacred treasures to be taken out of every church beyond the wall, and carried across the Bosphorus for security. In this extremity the citizens turned their eyes to Belisarius, who had now lived for ten years in obscurity; he was called from his retirement, and invested with the supreme command. The aged general acted in a manner worthy of his established reputation; knowing that he could not depend upon his raw levies, he took post behind a strong line of entrenchments, and by kindling a multitude of fires deceived the enemy into the belief that he was at the head of a numerous army. Profiting by this deception, he diligently fortified his position, so that when Zabergan, after discovering the artifice, came to attack the imperialists, he was repulsed with great loss. Belisarius was preparing to follow up his victory, when the envious courtiers stimulated the jealousy of the emperor, and obtained the general's recall. Germanus, who was appointed his successor, however, pursued the course which Belisarius had planned, and Zabergan was forced to repass the Danube. Justinian excited a rival tribe to attack

the Cutrigurs ; and the Huns, thus engaged in mutual warfare, left the empire in temporary tranquillity.

Scarcely had this danger been averted when the factions of the Circus filled Constantinople with fresh tumults. These were repressed after much mischief had been done, but some officers of rank deeming that the emperor had acted with gross partiality conspired against his life. The plot was detected, and the enemies of Belisarius bribed some of the conspirators, by a promise of pardon, to accuse that general of having shared their treason. The benefactor of the empire was imprisoned for seven months ; at length his innocence was established, and he was set at liberty. But he did not long survive his tardy justification, and grief for the unworthy treatment he had endured, brought down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. (A.D. 565.) These circumstances have given rise to a romantic tale of Belisarius, old and blind, being reduced to such misery, that he was forced to beg his bread ; this, however, is a mere invention, devised six hundred years after the hero's death. The ingratitude of Justinian to his benefactor was sufficiently gross, without being exaggerated by such an absurd calumny.

Justinian did not long survive his general ; shortly before his death, he is said to have fallen into heresy, and to have persecuted the orthodox party, of which he had during the previous part of his life been the strenuous, not to say bigoted supporter. He issued an edict enforcing his new creed, against which most of the prelates strongly remonstrated ; but before the emperor could take any measures to overcome their obstinacy, he fell a victim to a mortal disease, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, and thirty-ninth of his reign.

Justinian and Nushirva'n were the last rulers of the Byzantine and Persian empires, whose reigns could be called glorious ; the triumphs of the former belonged principally if not wholly to his generals, the glory of the

latter was his own. Both seem to have accelerated the decline of their respective empires, for conquests can only be retained by the ability used in their acquisition. The conquest of Africa and Italy only afforded a wider scope of action to the general corruption that pervaded the imperial government, and the continued employment of barbarian mercenaries at once showed the decay of martial spirit among the Greeks and Romans, and rendered its revival impossible. Justinian had many good, and but few great qualities; his intentions were generally pure, but he allowed himself too often to be led astray by his empress and his courtiers. The code of laws compiled by his directions has immortalized his name, and would have entitled him to admiration, but for the changes made in it subsequent to its publication, from vanity or some worse motive. He built more churches, monasteries, hospitals, and other public buildings than all the preceding emperors, many of them, especially the cathedral of St. Sophia, noble monuments of architectural skill. But the enormous expenditure required for these edifices consumed the public revenue,—a province was ruined to ornament a city. Vast sums were lavished in purchasing the friendship, or rather the forbearance of the barbarians; and to meet these expenses, the old taxes were levied with more than ordinary severity, and new impositions added, the soldiers were defrauded of their pay, and the distribution of corn to the poor suspended. But the courtiers were permitted to riot on the spoils of the empire, and the provincial governors permitted to oppress their subjects if they allowed the emperor to share their plunder. Justinian's religion was sullied by intolerance: he persecuted the pagans, the Jews, the different bodies of heretics, and finally the orthodox themselves, when he was led astray in attempting to investigate the mysteries of theology. Though always involved in war, he was not a soldier; Germanus, Narses, and Belisarius fought and conquered,

but the emperor was always the most formidable obstacle to their success. Shut up in his palace with Theodora, who held him as if in chains, he forgot his armies as soon as they quitted Constantinople, and took no care to supply them with food, recruits, and the munitions of war. His generals had to fight not only against Persians, Vandals, and Goths, but against the negligence of their prince, and the malignant jealousy of his favourites.

If credit were given to the anecdotes of Procopius, Justinian's character should be drawn in darker colours; but the secretary of Belisarius is a self-condemned witness. He published in the emperor's life-time a fulsome eulogium on his virtues, and immediately after his death assailed his character with a virulence that has rarely been equalled. Such testimony of course is worthless; Justinian was neither an angel nor a dæmon, but a sovereign of ordinary character, whom circumstances invested with more importance than any monarch of his dynasty.

CHAPTER X.

The Reigns of Justin II., Tiberius, Maurice, &c.

(From A.D. 565 to A.D. 629.)

JUSTINIAN died childless, but he bequeathed the empire to his nephew Justin II, who had won his favour by marrying Sophia, the niece of his beloved Theodora. The Senators readily ratified the choice of the late emperor, and the people received with intense delight a prince remarkable for his attachment to the orthodox faith. Justin, after his coronation, presented himself to his subjects; and having made the promises usual with a sovereign at the beginning of his reign, he liberated the prisoners confined for state offences, and took upon himself the payment of the enormous debt which his predecessor had contracted. His next care was to remedy the disorders of the Church,

which Justinian had thrown into confusion by the change of his creed; the exiled bishops were recalled, and the prelates who flocked to the court were sent home to take care of their respective dioceses. These measures were hailed as the auspices of a happy reign; but the hopes of the empire were doomed to be disappointed. No sooner was Justin secure of the throne, than he sunk into the lowest debauchery; and publicly sold the dignities, both of the church and state, to procure money for the gratification of his depraved appetites. The empress Sophia, as imperious, but not as prudent as her aunt, took advantage of her husband's weakness to usurp the supreme authority. She procured the murder of the son of Germanus, whose claims on the empire were at least equal to those of Justin, and provoked conspiracies, which were cruelly punished. But a far more fatal crime was the insult she offered to Narses, the conqueror and governor of Italy; an insult that brought a new train of calamities on that unhappy country.

It has been already mentioned, that the Lombards had sent a body of auxiliaries to the imperial army in the war against Totila. After the final defeat of the Goths, Narses sent his barbarous allies home, laden with plunder, because he was unable to restrain their excesses. On their return, the Lombards inflamed the minds of their countrymen, by describing the wealth of Italy, and the ease with which it might be wrested from its feeble inhabitants. Alboin, the youthful monarch of the Lombards, equally brave and ambitious, resolved to seize such a tempting prize; but, before making any effort, he deemed it necessary to remove the Gepidæ, the irreconcilable enemies of his name and nation. For this purpose, he entered into close alliance with the Avars, promising them half the spoils and all the territory of the devoted nation. Cunimond, the king of the Gepidæ, was not daunted by the double invasion of the Lombards and Avars; he marched boldly to meet

Alboin; and a fierce battle ensued, in which the two nations contended for existence. The Lombards were victorious; they gave no quarter to the enemy; so that scarcely a messenger survived to carry intelligence of the defeat. Cunimond fell on the field, and his skull was converted into a drinking-cup by the savage conqueror. The few Gepidæ who survived the battle, were either made slaves, or incorporated with the Lombards; but their lot was rendered tolerable by the marriage of Alboin to Rosamond, the daughter of their late king; for she used her influence with her husband in favour of her countrymen.

Alboin still hesitated in attacking Italy, through dread of the abilities of Narses; but he heard with pleasure that this general had been recalled, and ordered to bring the public treasure with him to Constantinople. Narses remonstrated against this command, and represented in strong terms the danger of leaving the troops without pay. Fired at his disobedience, Sophia sent him an order "to return to Constantinople, and superintend the spinning of her maids, for that men alone were fit to rule provinces and armies."—"I will spin her a thread that she will not be able to unravel," said the enraged eunuch; and he sent messengers to invite Alboin into Italy. When the Lombards, however, approached, Narses bitterly repented of the treason that had sullied the glory of a long life, and died of grief, declaring with his latest breath joy for his escape from the dreadful calamities that were impending over the empire.

Longinus, the successor of Narses, had no military experience, and the avarice of the emperor left him almost without an army. Alboin, on the other hand, had added to the Lombards vast hordes of German tribes, who marched as to an assured conquest. Twenty thousand Saxons, with their wives and children, came to seek under his auspices new establishments; he also showed his confidence of success by resigning Pannonia to the Avars, on condition

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of their restoring it to the Lombards if ever they should return.

Alboin found the passes of the Alps unguarded; from the summit of a mountain he pointed out to his soldiers the fertile fields to which their success was soon to give the name of Lombardy, and having thus excited their cupidity descended into the plain. (A.D. 568.) No resistance was offered to his march; most of the cities were ungarrisoned, and the terrified inhabitants fled for refuge to the Venetian islands. Mantua and Milan were besieged and taken; but Ticinum, the modern Pavia, which had been fortified by the Goths, sustained a siege of nearly three years' duration. The conquests of the Lombards were divided into three great duchies; that of Friuli (Forum Julii) in the north, which served as a barrier against any new incursions of the barbarians; that of Spoletum in the centre, which checked the garrisons of Rome, Ravenna, and the cities that still adhered to the empire; and that of Beneventum, in the south of Italy, which was daily enlarged until it extended from sea to sea.

Whilst Alboin was wresting Italy from the Byzantines, a new war was kindled on the Persian frontiers. The Turks descending from their habitations in the Altaian mountains, near the source of the Irtisch, had, as we have already mentioned, extended their conquests towards the west, and rendered themselves masters of the country between the Oxus and Jaxartes; or, as those rivers are now called, the Sihun and Jehun. This country, called Transoxiana by the Romans, and Mawer-en-nahar by the Arabians, both of which names signify the country beyond the Oxus, had long been the entrepôt of a considerable trade between Europe and China. The Sogdians after their conquest by the Turks, sought from the Khakan, or supreme chief of the victors, permission to send an embassy into Persia, for the purpose of opening a silk trade with that country. Dizaboul, who was then the ruler of

the Turkish tribes, readily assented; and deputed some of his nobles to form a commercial treaty with Nushirva'n. This however was far from pleasing to the king of Persia, who had long laboured to open a direct trade between Persia and China, through his ports on the Persian gulf; he therefore dismissed the Turkish ambassadors with very little ceremony, and when a second deputation arrived he caused the principal members to be poisoned, and then reported that the Persian climate was fatal to the Turkish constitution. Dizaboul was not deceived; but he dissembled his resentment, while he secretly negotiated an alliance with the Byzantine court*. Justin sent an ambassador to the Khakan, who found that the Turks had made greater advances in civilization than could have been expected from nomade tribes; the Khakan received the embassy with great kindness, and immediately declared war against Persia. Nearly at the same time the Christian Armenians, weary of the persecutions to which they were subjected by their Persian rulers, revolted, and claimed the aid of the Byzantines; and the Christians in Arabia Felix commenced a war with their idolatrous neighbours. Justin had thus a very favourable opportunity of retrieving the provinces that had been wrested from the empire in the East; but he contented himself with appointing Marcian general, without furnishing either an army or munitions of war. Marcian hastily assembled some peasants and shepherds, badly armed and worse disciplined; with these he passed the Euphrates and ravaged the frontiers, Nushirva'n being engaged at the opposite side of his dominions in the Turkish war; but such a tumultuous invasion could produce no permanent impression.

Pavia, after having so long withstood the Lombards, was finally subdued by famine. (A.D. 572.) Alboin, at first,

* The Turkish ambassadors were astonished to find silk produced abundantly in Constantinople from the stock of worms introduced by Justinian.

designed to level it to the ground; but he suddenly changed his resolution, and treated the inhabitants with unexpected mildness. Indeed, his clemency had become so celebrated, that the cities he had subdued boasted of their happiness in having escaped from the tyranny and exaction of the Byzantines, to find security for person and property under the equitable, though stern rule of the Lombards. But Alboin had not quite laid aside his native barbarism; during a feast at Verona he ordered the cup formed from the head of Cunimond to be brought, and having quaffed from it, handed it to the queen, desiring her "to drink with her father." Rosamond obeyed the horrid mandate, but at the same time vowed a deadly revenge. She hired assassins, whom she introduced into her husband's apartments while he slept, and the conqueror of Italy fell covered with wounds at the feet of the woman he had outraged. The Lombards would have punished the murderers, but they escaped into the imperial territories, where Rosamond died of poison she had prepared for one of her paramours. Cleph was chosen the successor of Alboin, and he enlarged the dominions of the Lombards in Italy, but could not succeed in driving the Byzantines from the peninsula.

The Persian war was equally unfortunate to the empire. Marcian, so far from being able to repeat his incursions, could not protect the frontiers; and Nushirva'n, after having ravaged Syria and Mesopotamia, captured the important fortress of Dara. The Avars, or rather, the Huns Cutrigurs, at the same time invaded Dalmatia, and defeated with great loss the army sent to oppose them; Justin was forced to purchase peace from these barbarians, whose hostilities had been originally provoked by his vaunts and insults. Such repeated calamities overwhelmed the feeble mind of the emperor; he sunk into incurable idiotcy, and his subjects rejoiced in a visitation that freed them from the evils of his administration.

Sophia assumed the regency, and purchased a truce with the king of Persia. She also persuaded her husband, in one of his lucid intervals, to nominate Tiberius, a young Thracian soldier, his associate in the government; and it was scarcely possible to have made a better selection. Under his prudent direction, the affairs of the East began to assume a more favourable aspect; the Persians, who were rarely mindful of the faith of treaties, suffered several defeats, and many of the minor Asiatic nations entered into alliance with the Byzantine government. The internal administration of the provinces was thoroughly reformed: the public revenue was expended in remedying the ravages of war; and the improvements proceeded so rapidly, that the Byzantines, ignorant of the resources arising from a liberal economy, asserted that Tiberius had been supplied with treasure by a miracle.

The death of Justin (A.D. 578), made no change in the government; but when Tiberius announced his secret marriage with Anastasia, and proclaimed her empress, Sophia, who had firmly believed herself the object of his affections, and had therefore exerted all her influence to procure his elevation, was filled with all the rage that jealousy and disappointment could inspire, and planned a conspiracy for his destruction. It was her design to place Justinian, the son of Germanus, on the throne; and that prince, who had acquired some fame in the Persian wars, readily agreed to her ambitious schemes. The plot, however, was discovered before the conspirators had completed their arrangements; Sophia, stripped of all her wealth and influence, was forced for the future to subsist on a moderate pension. Justinian was pardoned, and became thenceforward the emperor's most faithful servant; the other accomplices of the plot had opportunities opened for their escape, after having been warned of the discovery.

The death of the great Nushirva'n seemed to afford an

opportunity of recovering from the Persians the fortresses they had wrested from the empire ; ambassadors were sent to demand the restoration of Nisibis and Dara ; but Hormuz, who inherited the pride, though not the abilities of his father, not only refused the demand, but threw the ambassadors into a dungeon ; and did not liberate them, until they had endured every torture that barbarous malice could invent. Tiberius placed little confidence in the success of these negotiations ; and anticipating the refusal of Hormuz, had assembled a powerful army, which passed the Euphrates under the command of Maurice, and gained a victory that laid Mesopotamia at the mercy of the invaders. A second campaign was attended with similar success ; Hormuz was forced to solicit peace ; and Maurice, who had thus retrieved the Roman fame in Asia, returned to receive the honours of a triumph at Constantinople. (A.D. 581.) These victories, however, were counterbalanced by the loss of Sirmium, the last possession of the empire in Pannonia, and the bulwark of the northern frontiers, which was captured by the Avars. Grief for this loss, and disease, so weakened the emperor, that he became unable to sustain the cares of state, and he chose Maurice as his associate and successor.

Tiberius did not long survive the elevation of Maurice ; his death spread sorrow through the empire. During his brief reign of three years and ten months, he had done more to merit the affection of his subjects than any emperor since the great Theodosius. His last act was not the least meritorious ; the successor he had chosen was well worthy to supply his place. Maurice, to the piety and virtues of Tiberius, added unremitting diligence, and a steadiness of purpose, which no flattery could shake. Descended from an old Roman family that had settled in Cappadocia, he had early cultivated science and literature ; nor did he remit his studies even in the turmoil of the camp. His treatise on the military art, which has come down

to our times, is written in a purer style than was common in his age. Immediately after his accession, he invited his parents to court, and entreated them to be present at his marriage with the daughter of his benefactor. It was the first time that an emperor's parents had witnessed his nuptials, and this circumstance gave unusual interest to the ceremony ; amid all the pomp and pageantry of the marriage, the Byzantines, degraded as they were, admired nothing so much as the filial reverence that Maurice showed to his parents.

Though involved in war with the Persians and the Avars, the emperor attempted to alleviate the evils to which Italy was exposed from the tyranny of the Lombards. Gregory, the papal legate, represented in forcible terms the miseries of the Romans ; and Maurice, deeply affected, promised to take energetic measures for their protection. As he could not spare any portion of his army from the northern and eastern frontiers, he purchased the alliance of Childebert, the great grandson of Clovis, with fifty thousand pieces of gold, and engaged him to deliver Italy. The Lombards, roused by the approaching danger, laid aside their mutual animosities, and elected Antharis king, a title which had fallen into disuse among them, each chief exercising the supreme authority in his own dominions. As the institutions of the Lombards were strictly feudal, Antharis would have possessed insufficient authority, had not his high character produced such an effect on the dukes, that they voluntarily yielded the obedience he was unable to enforce. (A.D. 584.) Four times the Franks descended from the Alps to contend with the conquerors of Italy. A large bribe induced Childebert to retire the first time without a contest ; the second expedition was frustrated by the dissensions of the invaders ; in the third attempt, the Franks were routed with great slaughter ; they returned a fourth time, burning for revenge ; and Antharis was forced to leave his territo-

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ries exposed to their fury. Had the imperialists joined the Franks, the power of the Lombards would probably have been wholly destroyed; but Childebert's generals, after waiting six days in an unwholesome situation which had been appointed for effecting the junction of the two armies, were disappointed by their allies, and compelled to retire by the increasing sickness of their troops. Antharis did not pursue the Franks in their retreat; he turned his attention to the provinces that still retained allegiance to the empire, and added several important districts to the territory of the Lombards. In spite of the efforts of Gregory, who had been recently elevated to the papacy, and the remonstrances of Maurice, Childebert concluded a treaty with Antharis; and thus destroyed the hopes that had been entertained of recovering Italy. The emperor could not punish the perfidy of Childebert; he therefore feigned an acquiescence which he did not feel, and received with flattering honours Syagrius, the Frank ambassador, who came to announce to him the conclusion of the treaty.

The wars with the Persians and Avars were more successful: Philippicus, who commanded the imperial forces in Asia, gained several important advantages; of which however he failed to make use. His deficiencies were amply compensated by the exertions of his lieutenant Heraclius, who conquered all the fortresses between the Euphrates and the Tigris, and made Hormuz tremble in his capital. In the beginning of the Avar invasion, the barbarians were every where victorious, and advanced even to Adrianople, which they closely besieged; but the imperial forces sent to succour the city surprised the Avars in their camp, and destroyed so many of their soldiers that these barbarians were reduced to inaction for several years.

A revolution in Persia (A.D. 590.) caused by the tyranny and ingratitude of Hormuz, greatly increased the power of the Byzantines in Asia. The Turks crossed the Oxus, under

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the pretence of marching against the emperor of Constantinople, and obtained from Hormuz a free passage through his dominions. Their conduct soon showed him that he had unwarily admitted his worst enemies into the heart of his kingdom, and he resolved to make an effort for their expulsion. He was fortunate in the choice of a general, whose person is said to have been described in a prophecy. Bahram, whose victory was thus predicted, totally destroyed the invaders with far inferior forces, and sent an immense booty to Al Modain. An envious courtier insinuated that the victorious general had kept back part of the plunder, and Hormuz lent a ready ear to the suggestion. Soon after, Bahram met with a reverse in the war with the Byzantine empire, and Hormuz, anxious to degrade a leader whose talents he feared and envied, sent him a suit of female apparel, a distaff, and a spindle. The brave soldier put on the dress, and presenting himself to the army, said, "Behold the reward that my sovereign bestows upon my services." A general burst of indignation answered this appeal; all demanded to be led against a ruler who treated his best servant with such wanton insult, and Bahram proclaimed that prince Khosrau (Chosroes) should be king in place of his father. Hormuz heard these tidings with mingled rage and terror, he would have slain his son, had not Khosrau fled at the moment of receiving the intelligence; he threw into prison the prince's maternal uncles, and threatened destruction to all his friends. But this act precipitated his ruin; the friends of these nobles broke open the prison, and not only liberated them, but seized Hormuz himself, and deprived him of sight, to incapacitate him from reigning. Khosrau, having learned his father's fate, returned to the capital, but found that Bahram was resolved to contend with him for the throne. A battle was fought near the capital, Khosrau was totally defeated, and forced to seek refuge in the Byzantine territories. On the day that the prince fled, his uncles strangled

the unfortunate Hormuz, lest his claims should at some future time prove injurious to their nephew.

Maurice treated the fugitive prince with the courtesy due to his rank, and an army was raised to aid in his restoration. This was found to be an easier task than had been anticipated; the Persians were fondly attached to the royal house of Sassan; and Khosrau himself was popular with all ranks. In less than eight months from his taking possession of Al Modain, Bahram was forced to fly into Turkestan, where he was subsequently poisoned. Khosrau, on ascending the throne, took the surname of Parvi'z, or the victorious. He strictly performed all the engagements he had made with his allies, publicly adopting the emperor Maurice as his father, and restoring the frontier fortresses to the Romans.

During these wars in the East, Maurice was harassed by the continued hostility of the Lombards in Italy, and by a dispute with pope Gregory, who had become jealous of the supremacy claimed by the patriarch of Constantinople. The anger of the Roman prelate was roused chiefly by his rival's assumption of the title of Universal Bishop; he little thought that his successors in the chair of St. Peter would soon claim and exercise a spiritual despotism far beyond any to which their rivals in Byzantium had aspired. Thrace, Mœsia, Illyria, and Dalmatia, continued to be devastated by the Avars, Sclavonians, and Bulgarians; Maurice resolved to take the field against these barbarians in person, but the senate and his family supplicated him to remain in the palace, and leave the conduct of the war to his generals. The emperor, however, persevered; but on the road he encountered what, in that superstitious age, were regarded as unfavourable omens, and he therefore returned to Constantinople. The imperial lieutenants, at first, gained some advantages over the barbarians, which were celebrated as triumphs; though they were trifling in

amount, and unproductive of any permanent result. On the other hand, the Avars captured twelve thousand Romans, forming part of the army commanded by Commentiolus ; and this calamity was universally attributed to the treachery rather than the incapacity of that general. Maurice himself did not escape from suspicion ; it was said that he dreaded the mutinous disposition of these troops, and gave secret orders for their betrayal ; certain it is, that he prevented all inquiry into the misconduct of Commentiolus, and that he refused to ransom the prisoners, though the Avars only demanded a moderate sum, and threatened to massacre their captives if the money was withheld.

Avarice was the great vice of the emperor ; he refused the trifling ransom, and his unfortunate subjects were put to death. This intelligence filled the army on the northern frontier with indignation ; the rage of the soldiers became ungovernable, when they heard, in addition, that in order to spare the imperial magazines, it was resolved to establish their winter-quarters in the hostile country of the Avars. Phocas, a simple centurion, was chosen leader of the revolt ; the friends and supporters of the emperor either fled, or were torn to pieces ; and the army marched towards Constantinople. (A.D. 602.) Nearly at the same time a formidable insurrection burst forth in the city ; and Maurice, whose parsimony had given general offence, finding himself deserted by his former partisans, fled with his family to Chalcedon. Phocas entered the city in triumph ; he declared himself the patron of the green faction ; upon which the blues reminded him that Maurice was yet alive. The barbarous usurper immediately hastened to deliver himself from this fear ; his emissaries seized Maurice and his family ; they dragged him to the shores of the strait in sight of his own palace ; his five sons were successively murdered before his face, while he in devout submission to the divine will raised his eyes to heaven, exclaiming, " Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are

thy judgments!" One of the imperial nurses wished to substitute her own child for the youngest of the princes; but Maurice revealed the fraud, declaring that he would deem himself guilty of murder if he permitted a stranger to be involved in the fate which Providence had decreed for his family. The tragedy was completed by the murder of the emperor himself, in the 64th year of his age. For several days the remains of the sufferers remained exposed to the insults and indignities of the soldiers, until some pious persons obtained from Phocas permission to inter them privately.

Phocas was raised to the throne by the army; his cruelty and tyranny soon disgusted the citizens, but dread of military violence prevented any display of their feelings. The palace became a scene of the most brutal debauchery; the usurper, destitute of education, had a taste only for the lowest sensual pleasures, and he indulged his licentious passions without restraint. He, however, succeeded in winning one partisan; the title of "universal bishop" procured for Phocas the support of pope Gregory, and that prelate unhesitatingly assumed an authority which he had so strenuously denounced when it was claimed by the patriarch of Constantinople.

Khosru' Parvi's had long been weary of the peace between the Persians and Romans; he eagerly embraced so good a pretext for war as the murder of his benefactor, and he craftily spread a report, that a son of Maurice, having escaped from the malice of his enemies, had sought refuge in Persia. The Jews of Palestine were at this time in a state of frantic excitement, owing to the persecutions of Phocas, who had compelled many of them to submit to baptism. Ever rash in their insurrections, they did not wait for the approach of the Persians, but took up arms in Antioch, burned its splendid palaces, and murdered the patriarch and several of the clergy. The imperial army sent to punish this revolt, gained a victory over the insur-

gents ; but, before they could consummate their vengeance, Khosru' had crossed the frontiers with an army that defied resistance, and Antioch was yielded to him without a blow. The insurgent Jews joined the standard of the invader, and Khosru' turned towards Constantinople, while his generals undertook the conquest of Syria and Palestine.

The whole empire was now weary of Phocas : conspiracy after conspiracy was detected and punished at Constantinople : the merciless butchery not only of the guilty, but the suspected, only increased the general hatred of the tyrant : the green and blue factions suspended for a moment their animosities, which had deluged with blood every city of the empire, to join in removing a monster who was the enemy of the human race. Heraclius, the exarch of Africa, was at length induced to attempt the deliverance of the empire : he sailed to the Hellespont with a powerful fleet, and was joined by the usurper's son-in-law, and several of his favourites. The entrance to the harbour of Constantinople was forced by the African fleet ; but the city was saved from the horrors of an assault by Photius, a nobleman whose wife Phocas had dishonoured. Aided by a troop of his friends, he arrested the usurper, and conveyed him bound hand and foot to the vessel of Heraclius.

Phocas was hurried into the presence of his conqueror, who asked him, with a contemptuous smile, "Wretch, is it thus that thou governest an empire !"—"Govern it better thyself !" replied Phocas, with courage worthy a better man. Heraclius was so enraged at the retort, that he ordered the hapless wretch to be put to death by torture. (A.D. 610.) Heraclius was immediately chosen emperor by acclamation, and after some affected delay he accepted the proffered crown.

Never was the empire in such a deplorable condition as at the accession of Heraclius : the barbarians desolated all the provinces of the West, the Persians were uninterrupted in their victorious career through the east. The Jews, sti-

mulated by an obscure prophecy, that "the Roman power was about to be destroyed by a circumcised people," conspired throughout Asia to restore the ancient kingdom of Israel, and Heraclius, as if all his energies had been exhausted by the acquisition of the empire, sunk into careless inactivity.

The Jews of Tyre, deluded by the prophecy already mentioned, a prophecy, we may remark, which afterwards proved of great service to the Saracens, conspired to seize the city on the night of the festival of Easter. (A.D. 613.) Their numbers are said to have amounted to forty thousand, and their brethren dispersed throughout Egypt, Palestine, and the islands of the Levant, were invited to share in the enterprize. Fortunately, the bishop of Tyre discovered the conspiracy; he armed the principal inhabitants, and seized a large number of suspected Jews. Their brethren came before the gates at the appointed time, but were repulsed with loss. Finding the plot discovered, they wreaked their vengeance on the churches beyond the walls, and set them on fire; but for every church from which the flames ascended, the Tyrians cut off the heads of one hundred Jews, and shot them with engines into the ranks of the enemies, nor did this horrible emulation cease until twenty churches had been burned, and the heads of two thousand Jews had been cast from the walls. Nearly at the same time Damascus was taken and pillaged by Shah-arbarz *, the Persian general, and a great number of its inhabitants dragged into captivity.

But the following year (A.D. 615.) was still more disastrous; a countless army of Persians under the command of Shah-arbarz burst into Galilee and Palestine, where they were joined by multitudes of Jews, eager to take vengeance for previous persecutions. The garrisons fled from the cities, the inhabitants who could escape

* The name signifies "the royal boar."

sought shelter in Egypt, Jerusalem itself was yielded to the invaders without a blow. The inhabitants, men, women, and children, were chained to be sent as slaves beyond the Tigris ; but the Jews purchased the miserable captives from the Persians, to glut their rage by a ruthless massacre, in which eighty thousand are said to have perished. Every Christian church was demolished ; the splendid cathedral of the Holy Sepulchre was consigned to the flames ; the wealth that had been accumulated by the pious offerings of three centuries, was seized by the victors, and what was most lamented, the wood of the true cross became the prey of the idolators.

The patriarch of Alexandria diligently exerted himself to console and support the fugitives from Jerusalem ; but in the following year Egypt itself became the prey of the Persians, and Khosru', emulating the example of Alexander, traversed the sands of the Libyan deserts, and destroyed the last remains of the Greek colony at Cyrene. The imperial forces were at the same time driven from Asia Minor, and a hostile camp established on the ruins of Chalcedon, within sight of Constantinople. For more than ten years the ravages of the Persians could be seen on the opposite side of the strait from the walls of the capital, while the citizens relied for protection only on the enemy's ignorance of naval affairs.

While his armies were subduing the Roman empire, Khosru' was devoted to luxury and magnificence, that had never been equalled even in the east. The Persian historians have written countless volumes describing his noble palaces, of which he had one for every season, the twelve thousand beauties of his harem, the fifty thousand steeds that stood in the royal stables, and the twelve hundred elephants that fed in his parks. Exaggerated as the descriptions of these flowery writers are, there is enough of truth in their statements to prove that no monarch ever lived in greater splendour. While he was thus in the

height of his prosperity, he received a letter from a camel driver at Mecca, exhorting him to forsake the religion of his ancestors and become the follower of his correspondent. Enraged at being uncereemoniously addressed by an Arabian whose name he had never before heard, Khosru' tore the letter in pieces and flung the fragments into the river Karasu', on whose banks he was encamped. Mohammed, who had thus strangely announced his mission to the greatest potentate of the age, when he learned the fate of his letter, announced that "God would thus tear Khosru's kingdom to pieces."

This prediction was fulfilled soon after it had been hazarded. Heraclius in despair had resolved to desert Constantinople and seek refuge in Africa, when he was induced by the exhortations of the patriarch to present himself in the Church of St. Sophia, and swear before his subjects that he would never desert the empire. Peace was concluded with the Avars, enemies as dangerous in the West as the Persians in the east, and the incursions of these barbarians were further checked by the establishment of two Sclavonic tribes, the Croats and the Servians, in Dalmatia, and along the north-western frontiers of Thrace. Heraclius won the favour of the Sclavonians by granting them lands which the ravages of the Avars had rendered desolate, and by this cheap sacrifice purchased protection for the most exposed parts of his dominions. Generals and money were still wanting; Heraclius resolved in person to supply the place of the former, his finances were recruited by melting down the plate of the churches, for he believed it better to use these treasures for the defence of Christianity than to leave them to become a prey to sacrilegious destroyers. Having collected a numerous army, he sent his soldiers through the Black Sea to the northern coasts of Asia Minor, (A.D. 621.) declaring that he would follow them in the ensuing spring.

From the moment that he joined the army, Heraclius

exerted himself to restore military discipline, which had been so completely neglected that the sound of a trumpet was unknown to most of the soldiers. The plan of his campaign was worthy of Hannibal or Scipio; he resolved to invade Persia through the Armenian mountains, and compel Khosru' to withdraw his forces from the imperial provinces to defend their native land. Several of the Armenian princes joined the army of Heraclius, and were of the greatest service during the ensuing campaign. Shah-arbarz, having received intelligence of this unexpected march, hastily advanced in the hope of attacking the Romans unexpectedly, but the light of a brilliant moon revealed the Persians to their adversaries, and Shah-arbarz could not refrain from cursing the planet that he usually adored. He soon had occasion to feel more grieved by another object of Persian worship; a dazzling sun was shining full in the faces of his soldiers, when they were suddenly attacked by Heraclius, and routed with dreadful slaughter. After this victory the Romans marched into winter-quarters, and Heraclius paid a brief visit to Constantinople, in order that its citizens might be gratified by the now unusual spectacle of a triumph. Khosru' had no better means of evincing his indignation, than murdering the Roman ambassadors that had been sent to him six years before, and whom he had ever since dishonourably detained in prison.

In the second campaign, Heraclius entered Atropatene, the modern Azerbaijan, and hasted forwards to besiege its capital. Tauris, or Tabriz, as it is now called, has always been esteemed the metropolis of northern Persia. It was also named Kandeak or Gandzak*, from an Armenian word which signifies a treasure, for tradition had reported that Cyrus had deposited there the vast wealth of Croesus. Khosru' marched to defend this important post, but in the first encounter

* Kandz or Gandz; it appears to be the same word as Gaza, which signifies a treasure in most oriental languages.

a panic seized his troops, and he was himself the foremost in a disgraceful flight. Heraclius then entered Tauris, where he destroyed the temples of fire, as Khosru' had formerly levelled the Christian churches. It was on this occasion that the perpetual fire was extinguished, which has given rise to the fable of its having miraculously disappeared at the moment Mohammed was born. Having gained several other triumphs, Heraclius retreated to secure safe winter-quarters in Albania.

The third campaign was passed entirely in Albania; though the Persians were overthrown in four great battles, they contrived by securing the defiles to protect their native country. Heraclius in the following year invaded Mesopotamia, where he completely defeated Shah-arbarz, and having collected immense spoil returned to his former quarters. The prisoners taken in both campaigns were liberated without ransom; they returned home weary of their monarch, and disposed to seize the first opportunity for rebellion.

Heraclius in his fifth campaign entered into alliance with the Khazars or Khozars, a formidable Turkish tribe whose dominions extended from the Volga to the Caucasus, and from the Black to the Caspian sea. Forty thousand Khazars joined the imperial army, but wearied by strict discipline and fatiguing marches, they returned home at the close of the year. Khosru' had in the mean time secured more formidable allies; the khakan of the Avars, bribed by Persian gold, proclaimed war, and advanced to the walls of Constantinople. The citizens emulated the valour of their sovereign; for ten successive days they repulsed the furious attacks of the barbarians, while the Roman fleet having the mastery of the straits, rendered the Persians in Chalcedon idle spectators of these combats. At length the Khakan, finding his provisions exhausted, his engines burned by the Greek fire, and his army on the point of numity, issued orders for retreat; threatening to

return next year with greater force, and take vengeance for his disappointment.

Assyria was the theatre of the sixth campaign. Heraclius took severe vengeance for the ravages of the Persians in Syria and Asia Minor, desolating this beautiful country with fire and sword. He encountered the Persian army on the banks of the river Zab, and gained a more decisive victory than any he had yet achieved. The road to the capital of Persia was now open, and Heraclius advanced through the beautiful valley of the Tigris towards Ctesiphon, along a road thickly studded with the palaces and pleasure houses of Khosru' and his nobles. Khosru' fled from his magnificent abode at Destajird on the approach of the enemy, and his wives, who had never before come abroad unveiled, followed him on foot, half-naked and bearing their children in their arms. Yet, even thus, he rejected every offer of peace, and insulted the ambassadors sent to propose a treaty. But his subjects were far from sharing Khosru's sentiments; they had lost all regard for a monarch whom they regarded as the cause of all the calamities that had befallen their country, and a general spirit of revolt spread rapidly through the army. At length Shiroueh, a son whom Khosru' had excluded from the succession, accompanied by a body of partisans, seized Khosru' and caused him to be murdered in prison. The beautiful Shireen, the beloved wife of Khosru', swallowed poison to escape from the infamous solicitations of Shiroueh; her loves and her misfortunes are the favourite theme of the Persian muse.

Peace was soon concluded between Heraclius and Shiroueh: the long wars between Greece and Persia terminated, Europe and Asia had to encounter a new race of conquerors, issuing from the deserts of Arabia, whose existence they scarcely knew until they had bitter experience of their power. The crime of Shiroueh brought dreadful calamities on Persia; famine and pestilence suc-

ceeded to the horrors of war; the guilty monarch fell into a profound melancholy, and died in less than eight months; a long series of civil wars ensued, in four years Persia had eight different sovereigns, of whom two were females. At length Yezdejird III. ascended the throne; he is said to have been the grandson of Khosru', but this is exceedingly doubtful: he appears to have had no talents for rule, and his only claim to celebrity is that he was the last of the house of Sassan.

Heraclius after an absence of six years returned in triumph to Constantinople. In the following spring (A.D. 629) he visited Jerusalem, and restored the wood of the true cross to the church of the Holy Sepulchre. Before surrendering it to the Persians, the patriarch had enclosed it in a case sealed with his own seal, and so little curiosity had its captors, that after having had it so long in their possession they returned it with the seal unbroken. After the termination of the Persian war, Heraclius sunk into the same luxurious lethargy that disgraced the commencement of his reign; the only object that engaged his attention was the Monothelite controversy, which arose from the attempt made by Theodorus to conciliate the Nestorians, by declaring that there was only a single will in the two natures of Jesus Christ. The emperor was immersed in sloth, the church distracted by disputes on a point that none of the controversialists comprehended, when the Saracens burst into Syria with a violence that threatened ruin to the empire and Christianity. A new religion and a new race of conquerors now demand our attention, and in the next chapter we shall briefly investigate the origin of both.

CHAPTER XI.

Origin of Mohammedanism. Life of Mohammed.

(From A.D. 569 to A.D. 632.)

THE peninsula of Arabia, though intersected by lofty mountains, consists chiefly of level sandy plains, which can support but few inhabitants. Even that portion so celebrated under the name of Arabia the happy, could only be deemed delightful by men to whom the sight of verdure was rare, who had often felt the want of a shade to protect them from the scorching rays of the sun, and whose thirst was usually allayed by the brackish water of the desert. It is situated between the Persian, Indian, and Red Seas; the northern boundary is very indefinite, the Greeks extended it to a line drawn between the river Euphrates north of Babylon, and the southern extremity of the Mediterranean; but the eastern geographers restrict the limits to a line drawn between the northern extremities of the gulfs of Persia and Akaba. Stony Arabia, according to the orientals, belongs partly to Syria, and desert Arabia they call the deserts of Syria. The most valuable division of the peninsula is Yemen, so called because it lies to the right hand, or south of the temple of Mecca; it has been celebrated for wealth and fertility from the earliest ages, though in reality, the greater part of the valuable commodities which the ancients believed the produce of Arabia, were imported by the Egyptians from Africa and India. Still, the valleys of Yemen produce excellent corn, fruits, and spices, and from their contrast with surrounding sterility may well seem to the Arabs an earthly paradise.

The province of Hejâz, though not so fertile as Yemen, possesses greater commercial importance, on account of its possessing two good ports on the middle coast of the Red Sea, and occupying the centre of the lines of communication between Syria and Yemen in one direction, and between

the Red Sea and the Persian gulf in the other. It seems to have possessed cities from a very remote age, the chief of which have always been Mecca, and Yatreb or Medina.

The Arabs say that their pure tribes are descended from Kahtan, the son of the patriarch Heber, and their mixed tribes from Ishmael the son of Abraham. The prophetic description of Ishmael is still applicable to all his descendants. "He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren *." It is a common boast with the Arabians, that their country has never been subdued, and the whole of it certainly has never been subject to a foreign yoke, though some of the provinces have been tributary to various conquerors. Though some of the Arabians dwell in fixed habitations, while others are nomadic, the national character of both is the same, the Arab's mind is quick rather than intelligent, he is at once credulous and enthusiastic, reckless of danger, and impatient of control. His frame is hardy rather than robust, capable of enduring great fatigue, and privations, under which any but the inhabitants of a desert would soon sink. His favourite companions are his camel and his horse, and these animals appear in Arabia to have obtained a great superiority over the rest of their species, from being raised into intimacy with man.

The ancient Arabs worshipped the Sun and the Planets, but in later ages they were distracted by a great variety of religions. Some of the petty states had adopted the Jewish and others the Christian creed; and in no part of the world were heresies so abundant and religious animosities more violent. Differences in belief, and rivalry between tribes, filled the entire peninsula with confusion and bloodshed; but Mecca enjoyed comparative tranquillity, because it was regarded as the common metropolis

* Gen. vi. 12.

of the Arabs, the centre of their commerce, and the citadel of their race. It was to be expected that from such a city should emanate the proposal for a national union of the Arabs, and obviously the best bond of such a union would be a common creed. The notion of creating a centralization of feeling, which would unite all the Arabs in the maintenance of their country's liberty, was presented to the mind of an obscure individual, and the means that he used were those best suited to the circumstances of his age and nation. The character of Mohammed as a legislator will be best explained by a brief history of his life and mission.

Mohammed was born at Mecca about the year 569 of the Christian era ; he belonged to the Koreish, the most illustrious of the Arabian tribes, and he traced his ancestors up to Ishmael the son of Abraham. His mother is said to have been a Jewess converted to Christianity, and from her he received in his youth religious impressions, which were never effaced. The year he was born was remarkable for the first attempt made on the independence of the Hejâz ; the Ethiopians laid siege to Mecca, but were defeated with great loss, and their overthrow was attributed by the superstitious citizens to the interference of God, who would not allow the temple of the Kaaba to be polluted by strangers. At an early age Mohammed lost his parents, but their place was supplied by his uncle Abu Taleb, by whom he was carefully educated. From his earliest years he manifested a contemplative disposition, refusing to join in the sports of his youthful companions, "because," he said, "man is not made for frivolous amusements." At the age of thirteen he made a commercial journey into Syria in company with his uncle ; and from that time appears to have been engaged in trade. Subsequently he became the factor of a rich widow, named Kadijah, who was so pleased with his attention and skill

that she made him her husband. The nuptials were celebrated with extraordinary magnificence, and he now ranked among the first men of the city.

Fifteen years elapsed in prosperous tranquillity, during which Mohammed probably planned the mighty enterprise he was about to undertake. It was his custom to retire, for a month annually, to a cavern in mount Hira, near Mecca, for the purpose of solitary contemplation. One day while in the cavern, he imagined or pretended that the angel Gabriel appeared to him, and saluted him with the title of Apostle of God. Mohammed instantly returned home and informed Kadjah of his vision; flattered with the notion of being the wife of a prophet, she instantly declared her belief in his mission, and was thus the first convert of the new creed. Her example was followed by Ali, the son of Abu Taleb, to whom Mohammed was repaying the kindness bestowed on his own childhood, and by Abu Bekr, Othman, and a few others. All those called themselves Mussulmans, that is, persons wholly resigned to the divine will. Mohammed fixed their belief and sustained their zeal by revelations, which he pretended to receive from heaven. Every time that he entertained a doubt, he asserted that the angel Gabriel came from heaven to remove his uncertainty, and as he could not read in the early part of his career, he fixed the angel's instructions in his mind by constant repetition, and then related them to his disciples, who reduced them to writing. Such was the origin of the Koran, that is, the Reading, or book which ought to be read.

During three years the new creed was promulgated in secret; at length Mohammed, at a large feast given to his kinsmen and friends, announced himself as an inspired Reformer. Ali was foremost in recognizing his claims, and was in turn proclaimed the prophet's lieutenant, but the greater part of the company treated the matter with ridicule

and contempt. Mohammed was not daunted; he began to preach to the populace in the market-place, pointing out the folly of idolatry, and the duty of worshipping the one true God. Converts were made slowly, and as the power of the prophet increased, the nobles of Mecca began to manifest jealous hostility. Mohammed could not show himself in public without being insulted; he was assailed even when at meals or at prayer. At length he yielded to the entreaties of his uncle, and removed to Tayef, three days' journey from Mecca. But the people of Tayef were as obstinate as his fellow citizens; when he began to preach, the chief of the city in the name of the community said to him, "If you are an envoy from God you need not our aid, if you are an impostor you do not merit our protection." The populace shared the sentiments of their chief, and Mohammed returned home disappointed.

For some time Mohammed continued to live in privacy, but when the Arabs assembled again at the annual fair of Mecca, he began to preach with greater energy than ever, and his claims became every where the theme of conversation. It happened that some merchants from the idolatrous city of Yatreb (Medina) had come to the fair; their citizens had recently subdued a Jewish tribe, that had settled in their neighbourhood, and had frequently heard the vanquished exclaim, "Would that our Messiah were come to deliver us from the hands of our enemies." It struck the people of Yatreb, that the new prophet whose claims made such a noise might possibly be the Messiah expected by their Jewish subjects, and they resolved to conciliate his favour. Mohammed for the first time probably descending to fraud, profited by their delusion, and assured them that he was the Messiah expected by the Jews, the paraclete promised to the Christians, and the great teacher whom universal tradition had led all the nations of the East to expect. The Yatrebites returned home and ex-

erted themselves so diligently, that there was soon no house in their city that did not contain some Mussulmans.

Mohammed had begun with enthusiasm, he now proceeded with imposture, he declared that he had been taken up into the seventh heaven and admitted to converse with the Most High. But this monstrous fiction disgusted his own disciples, and but for the obstinate zeal of Abu Bekr would have proved ruinous to all his plans. Soon afterwards, encouraged by the spread of his creed at Medina, he demanded an oath of allegiance from his followers, and to inflame their courage, assured them that whoever died in his service, would be instantly received into paradise.

When the magistrates of Mecca heard of this new act of daring, they were seized with terror. Fearing that a civil war would be kindled within their walls, they resolved to put the innovator to death, but Mohammed received timely notice of his danger, and escaped with a few followers to Yatreb. This event, called the Hejira or flight, is the era used by all Mohammedan nations; it occurred (A.D. 622.) in the 53d year of the prophet's age and the 13th of his mission.

Mohammed was received in triumph at Yatreb; the name of the place was changed into Medinet-al-Nabi, the city of the prophet, or Medina the city emphatically; a mosque was built for the new worship, and all authority, spiritual and temporal, was placed in the hands of Mohammed. The Mussulmans commenced a vigorous war against the inhabitants of Mecca; plundering expeditions swept their plains, the caravans were stopped on the roads, and even the sacred month, which from time immemorial had been consecrated to a universal truce, was violated by the followers of the prophet, who forged a new revelation to justify his disciples. The most remarkable of the skirmishes that took place in these marauding expeditions, occurred at the well of Bedr; the people of Mecca had sent

nine hundred and fifty men to protect the rich caravan from Syria, and Mohammed with only two hundred and thirty ventured to attack the escort. Overpowered by numbers, the Mussulmans were on the point of being routed, when the prophet, mounting his steed, flung a handful of dust towards the enemy, exclaiming, "May their faces be confounded." The soldiers of Mecca were seized with a superstitious terror, and ceased to make resistance; they were all either slain or made captive. Such of the prisoners as had shown any remarkable hostility to Mohammed were put to death, and a new revelation invented to justify this cruelty.

It was pretended and believed, that the victory was owing to the miraculous interference of the Deity; and Mohammed now declared war against all who did not embrace his creed, but especially against the Jews, whom he had in vain endeavoured to win by persuasion. A second army was sent from Mecca, and the Mussulmans were defeated at Ohod: but Mohammed declared that this overthrow was a punishment for their leniency in ransoming some of their former captives, instead of exterminating them as obstinate unbelievers. His followers took fresh courage from this declaration; their numbers continually increased, the entire peninsula was distracted by their enterprizes, and ere long, Mohammed became the most powerful prince in Arabia. At length, he acquired sufficient strength to march against Mecca; convinced that the possession of the national metropolis, and the national temple, was alone necessary to the completion of his projects. The people of Mecca besought a truce for a year; during which time the Mussulmans greatly extended their power by subduing the southern tribes. At the end of the truce, Mohammed, as had been stipulated, entered his native city, and after having performed his devotion at the Kaaba, returned to Medina. He again returned with a powerful army, and the city was taken by the brave but sanguinary Khaled, who had recently become a convert. Mohammed's first

care was to destroy the idols of the Kaaba, which thenceforth became the temple of the One God. He next marched against the idolaters of Tayef, and defeated them in the field, but was unable to capture the city; the expedition, however, produced abundance of plunder, and several new tribes hastened to pay homage to the prophet.

The ninth year of the Hejira (A.D. 631.) was remarkable for the number of embassies that came from various parts of Arabia to congratulate Mohammed on his victories, and to demand instruction in his creed. The Kaaba had been the rallying point for the ancient idolatry of Arabia; it had no longer an asylum when that temple became the sanctuary of Mussulmans. These deputations shewed Mohammed that his great objects—the liberation of all Arabia from foreign powers, and the union of the Arabs into a nation—were on the point of being accomplished. The provinces subject to Persia had already thrown off the yoke and adopted the creed of Isla'm; the southern portion of the peninsula had withdrawn its allegiance from the Abyssinian king and given it to the prophet of Mecca; the Roman province in the north, however, still remained annexed to the empire, and Mohammed was now resolved to attempt its recovery. After an expedition, which though but partially successful, produced immense advantages, Mohammed returned to perform his last pilgrimage to Mecca. On the road, he received the submission of most of the tribes that had hitherto persevered in idolatry; and, among others, the inhabitants of Tayef, who had paid dearly for their obstinacy, agreed to receive the new religion.

This pilgrimage proved how rapid had been the progress of Islamism; one hundred and fourteen thousand men followed the prophet to the Kaaba, and the multitude of animals sacrificed on the occasion exceeded calculation. After the ceremonies were over, Mohammed abrogated the sacred months of truce, declaring that the enemies of God should be assailed equally at all seasons; he also com-

manded that the lunar year should be alone used in the calendar, and he abolished the intercalation by which it was accommodated to the solar year. This mode of computation is still observed in all Mohammedan countries; and hence the beginning of their year falls sometimes in one season and sometimes in another.

After his return from Mecca, Mohammed's health rapidly declined; it is said that he had been poisoned by a Jewish woman, who wished by this experiment to determine his claims to be the Messiah, and that though the antidote he took saved his life for the time, yet his constitution never recovered the shock; but it is probable that licentious indulgences had weakened his frame, and rendered him too feeble to resist disease. Finding his malady increased, he declared to his numerous wives that he would entrust himself to the care of Ayesha alone, perhaps dreading that in the paroxysms of illness he might betray some important secret. Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Bekr, was a woman of strong mind, and was more respected if not more beloved by her husband than any other inmate of his harem. She communicated to the army the different commands of the prophet, especially directing expeditions to be sent against two new impostors who had appeared in Arabia, and were attacking Mohammed with his own weapons. As death approached, the prophet began to perceive the deficiencies of the Koran, and was anxious to make an additional revelation; it was presumed that he wished to appoint Ali, the son of the uncle that had guarded his infancy, and the husband of his favourite daughter, heir to his authority; and the enemies of that prince successfully exerted themselves to defeat the prophet's design. Ayesha especially, who hated Ali for having censured her conduct, and was jealous of his wife, the beautiful Fatima, struggled to prevent the nomination; fierce clamours were raised round the prophet's bed, until in fainting accents he requested

tation the character of the warlike tribes that were about to burst on the Romans and Persians, for these aphorisms were the rule of their conduct and the foundation of their hopes.

"There are two descriptions of eyes, which the fire of hell shall not destroy; the eyes that weep in contemplating divine indignation, and the eyes which are closed when in the act of combat for the cause of God."—"To urge with speed a horse in holy warfare for one night and one day; is better than fasting for a whole month."—"He who shall die, without having fought for God, or who never proposed that duty to himself, verily consigns himself to destruction by his hypocrisy."—One more of these aphorisms may be quoted as an example of sublime orientalism: "In the shade of the sabres Paradise is prefigured." It is easy to conjecture what must have been the effect of such lessons on a warlike chivalrous people like the Arabs, men to whom battle was familiar from their infancy; natural courage was stimulated by religious zeal, and the effect of both was irresistible.

CHAPTER XII.

Conquests of the Saracens.

(From A.D. 632 to A.D. 661)

THE death of Mohammed had nearly proved the ruin of the empire he had founded; many of the Arabian tribes threw off their allegiance, and returned to the religion of their fathers; the noble tribe of the Koreish at Mecca contemplated the restoration of idolatry, and an increasing party supported the pretensions of the impostor Moseilama. Among the Mussulmans themselves there were secret bickerings which threatened ruinous dissensions; the Hashemites, or relatives of Mohammed, were enraged at seeing the supreme power removed from their family, and

had Ali possessed the ambition of his wife Fatima, or Abu-Bekr evinced any sign of weakness, the religion of Islam would have been washed away in the blood of its professors. But the new Khaliph possessed abilities equal to the crisis, and fortunately the moderation of Ali could not be moved by the reproaches of his wife and her relations.

Abu-Bekr was born at Mecca a few years after Mohammed; he was one of the first to embrace the creed of Islam, and on becoming a convert he changed his name from Abd-al-Kaaba, the servant of the Kaaba, to Abd-allah, the servant of God; at a later period, when Mohammed married his daughter Ayesha, he took the name of Abu-Bekr, or father of the virgin. When Mohammed shocked most of his followers by relating the story of his night journey to heaven, Abu-Bekr was foremost in swearing that he believed the prophet, and his authority shamed others out of their incredulity. He was the sole companion of the prophet in his flight from Mecca, and shared with him the concealment in the cave that hid him from his pursuers. During Mohammed's last illness, Abu-Bekr, by the prophet's own desire, officiated for him in the mosque at Medina, and many thought that this circumstance, like Alexander's delivery of his ring to Perdiccas, was designed as a formal mark of his appointment to the succession. The most pressing danger to the new Khaliph arose from the pretensions of Moseilama; a little before Mohammed's death, he had sent the following letter to Medina: "From Moseilama the apostle of God, to Mohammed the apostle of God. Now let the earth be half mine and half thine." To which Mohammed replied; "From Mohammed the apostle of God to Moseilama the liar. The earth is God's; he giveth it for inheritance to such of his servants as he pleaseth; and the happy issue shall attend those that fear him." War would have instantly followed this correspondence, but for the mortal illness of

Mohammed, which Moseilama represented as a proof that Heaven had decided against his rival. Abu-Bekr entrusted the conduct of the war to Khaled-ebn-al-Walid, whom Mohammed on account of his desperate bravery had named "the sword of God;" unfortunately his cruelty was equal to his courage, and his sanguinary conduct in Syria procured him the more merited title of "the scourge of Christians." Khaled encountered the impostor's army near Akrabah, and gained a decided victory; Moseilama fell by the lance of a negro slave, and ten thousand of his followers lay with him on the plain. The survivors returned to their allegiance; several other impostors either fled or submitted, and the restless Khaled marched his army into Irak, where he gained a series of brilliant victories, and brought the provinces of the Lower Tigris under the dominion of the Koran.

Khaled was recalled from Irak to share in a more important expedition. Syria and Palestine had long attracted the cupidity of the Arabs, whom commercial intercourse had made acquainted with its fertility; Jerusalem was regarded with as much veneration by the Mussulmans as by the Jews or Christians, and tradition relates that Mohammed after viewing the lovely valley of Damascus from one of the surrounding hills, proclaimed it to be the earthly Paradise destined for the inheritance of true believers. Abu-Bekr himself had perhaps visited these provinces, for there is a tradition that he ever spoke in grateful terms of the hospitable conduct of the Syrian monks. His celebrated directions to his generals display knowledge of the country as well as political wisdom. It would be unpardonable to quote Abu-Bekr's words without noticing their co-incidence with what is generally considered a prophetic description of the Saracens in the book of Revelations*;

* Revelations ix. 4.

the reader who makes the comparison cannot avoid being struck by the remarkable similarity between the language of the Khaliph and the Apostle.

When the army was assembled, Abu-Bekr addressed the chief commander in the following terms ; "Take care, Yezid Ebn-abu-Sofia'n, to treat your men with tenderness and lenity. Consult with your officers on all pressing occasions, and encourage them to face the enemy with bravery and resolution. If you conquer, spare the aged, the infirm, the women and the children. Cut down no palm trees, destroy not the fields of corn. Spare all fruit-trees, slay no cattle but such as are absolutely necessary for food. Always preserve your engagements inviolate ; spare the religious persons who dwell in monasteries, and injure not the places in which they worship God. As for those members of the synagogue of Satan who shave their crowns, cleave their skulls, unless they embrace Islamism or pay tribute." Remembrance of their hospitality had thus purchased safety for the monks, while the secular clergy were devoted to destruction.

Heraclius was greatly alarmed by the news of the approaching invasion ; he assembled his council at Emessa, and represented in forcible terms the corruptions of his subjects, and the danger that menaced the empire. But it was impossible to inspire martial spirit into hearts devoted to profligate pleasures ; and, with a melancholy foreboding of the issue, the emperor took the necessary precautions for the defence of his dominions. At first, the progress of the Saracens was slow, and they received some severe checks ; but the aspect of affairs was changed by the arrival of Khaled ; his daring energy prevailed in every combat. The imperialists, filled with terror, no longer dared to face the enemy ; the governor of Bosra, in sheer terror, betrayed the place to the Arabs ; and the Khaliph's forces were thus enabled to undertake the siege of Damascus. Heraclius, anxious to save a city of such impor-

tance, levied hastily a great army, and entrusted it to his brother Theodorus, or, as the eastern writers say, to an Armenian nobleman named Werdan. Although the imperial army far outnumbered the invaders, the Saracens never doubted of success; all their generals, by a singular coincidence, met together in the plains of Ajnadin the same day (July 13th A.D. 633); and this junction of their forces at the moment the Romans were approaching, was regarded as a miracle by the enthusiastic Mussulmans. The women who followed the camp, shared in the general ardour, and formed themselves into a squadron ready for the field. It would be tedious to relate the vicissitudes of a battle that lasted from the dawn of day to the fall of night; suffice it to say, that it ended in the complete overthrow of the Christians; who are said by the oriental authors to have lost fifty thousand men, while less than five hundred Saracens were slain.

The battle of Ajnadin decided the fate of Damascus; though the citizens protracted their defence for a year longer. At length, they were exhausted, and offered to surrender to Abu Obeidah; for they dreaded the ferocity of the merciless Khaled. Abu Obeidah accepted the terms of the capitulation, without consulting his colleague; but while he entered the city peacefully on one side, Khaled had won his way by storm on the other, and announced to the despairing inhabitants that he would give no quarter. The slaughter continued through every street, until the savage conquerors met Abu Obeidah and his troops; an angry controversy ensued; one leader urging the obligations of a treaty, the other the sanguinary injunctions of the Koran. It was finally agreed, that the part of the city occupied by Abu Obeidah should enjoy the benefit of the capitulation; but Khaled greatly limited the stipulated advantage. It had been agreed, that those who wished to remove from the city should be allowed to retire with their property; Khaled would only grant them

protection for three days ; and when that period was expired, he pursued the fugitives with a large body of horse, guided by a renegade, whose wife had joined the band of exiles, through indignation at her husband's apostacy. The fugitives were overtaken, and one man alone was spared to carry the news of these disasters to Constantinople. Among the female captives, was the daughter of Heraclius ; her Saracen captors offered her to their renegade guide, whose wife had stabbed herself the instant she fell into his hands. But the apostate, struck with remorse, vowed himself to perpetual widowhood ; and the princess was, with his consent, restored to her father without ransom. .

A messenger was sent with the intelligence of this important conquest to Abu Bekr ; but the Khaliph lived not to receive the joyous news. He died on the very day that the city was taken, bequeathing the empire to Omar. During his brief reign, Abu Bekr had done much to consolidate the Saracenic empire ; he collected the scattered revelations of Mohammed, and arranged the Koran in the form that it still retains. His character was remarkable for moderation and generosity ; he retained no portion of the vast wealth acquired by his armies, but distributed it to his soldiers and the poor. To his subjects he was always easy of access ; and both by precept and example encouraged the republican simplicity, so remarkable in the early history of the Saracens. Even the partizans of Ali, who regard him as a usurper, reverence his memory, on account of his moderation and virtue.

Omar displayed some reluctance to accept the bequest of Abu Bekr ; when the Khaliph announced to him his design of naming him successor, Omar coolly replied that he had no need of the place. " But the place has need of you," replied Abu Bekr ; and Omar allowed himself to be persuaded. He took the title of Emir al Momemin, or Commander of the Faithful ; a title continued to all his successors in the Khaliphate. Even before his accession,

Omar had displayed an unworthy jealousy of the gallant Khaled; no sooner was he seated on the throne, than he transferred the command of the Syrian army from Khaled to Abu Obeidah. The deposed general showed no sign of discontent, but declared that in whatever station of life he was placed, he would be a faithful servant to the successor of Mohammed. An opportunity was soon offered for proving his fidelity; Abu Obeidah sent a detachment of his army to plunder the Christians, at an annual fair held near a monastery at the base of the mountains of Anti-Libanus. The Saracens had not inquired the strength of the enemy; they were outnumbered and surrounded, appearing, as the oriental historian quaintly observes, "like a white spot in a black camel's skin." One horseman cut his way through, and brought intelligence to Khaled of the danger of his countrymen; the brave warrior hastened with his detachment to their relief; his name filled the Christians with terror; they fled in confusion: not only was Abdallah saved, but the rich plunder of the assembled merchants became the prey of the Saracens.

Abu Obeidah sent a faithful account of this brilliant achievement to the Khaliph; adding that some Mohammedans had been corrupted by the luxuries of Syria, and had broken the law of the prophet by drinking wine. Omar, in reply, took no notice of Khaled's services, but commanded that those who had defiled themselves with wine should be punished by the bastinado. When Abu Obeidah proclaimed this edict, the transgressors came forward, voluntarily confessed their crime in the presence of the army, and submitted to the punishment.

Several of the Syrian cities terrified by the fate of Damascus, entered into treaties with the Saracens; Emessa and Baalbec, with some others of less note, were taken by force. But Omar was not satisfied with the slow progress of Abu Obeidah; he wrote him a reproachful letter, in which he stated that the Mussulmans were sacrificing the

service of God and his Apostle for the women and wealth of Syria. When this letter was read to the army, the warriors shed tears of rage and remorse, and demanded to be led to battle.

Heraclius was roused from his luxurious repose at Antioch, by the news of successive losses; he resolved to make one more vigorous effort to protect his empire, and assembled an army of two hundred thousand men, which he entrusted to Vahan*, a general of some experience. When Abu Obeidah heard the news, conscious of his own deficiencies he resigned the chief command to Khaled. Vahan was joined by an Arabian prince, named Jabalah, who had formerly embraced Islam, but had resumed the profession of Christianity, through dislike of Omar. On the advance of the imperial army, Khaled abandoned Emessa and took post behind the river Yermouk, which flows from mount Hermon into the lake of Tiberias. Vahan followed the Saracens slowly, always keeping the allied Arabs in his van, because, as he said, it was prudent to let "diamond cut diamond;" he lost precious time in a negotiation, which afforded the Saracens time for obtaining reinforcements from Arabia.

Both sides having prepared for action, the battle of the Yermouk commenced, and was maintained with unabated fury for several days; the Saracens were several times driven back to their camp, and as often rallied by the reproaches of the women, and by the example of the female heroines, who frequently charged the Christian lines. The fate of the desperate conflict was finally decided by the criminality of some of Vahan's officers; they had been hospitably entertained every night at the house of a Christian merchant, and they repaid his kindness by violating his wife, and murdering his child. The injured husband having vainly sought redress from Vahan, betrayed a division which he had undertaken to guide, into the hands of the

* Inaccurately called Manuel by the writers of the Universal History.

Saracens, and Khaled was thus enabled to make a decisive charge through the centre of the Christian lines. The rout was complete ; Vahan's soldiers at once resigned hope, they were hewn down without resistance, and it was not until they were weary of slaughter that the Saracens began to make prisoners. Seventy thousand of the best soldiers of Heraclius, with their general and principal officers, fell in this fatal field. It was the depth of winter ; cold, and rivers swollen by the floods, proved fatal to as many more ; about forty thousand were made prisoners. It is probable that the oriental authors have exaggerated these numbers, but they have fairly described the result of the battle "at Yermouk, an empire was lost and won." Four thousand Saracens fell and were buried on the field. The great success thus obtained by the Mussulmans was attributed, primarily to the prayers of Omar, and then to the exertions of the women, but neither would have been of much avail but for the valour and wisdom of Khaled.

Scarcely waiting for the army to be refreshed after this dreadful battle, Abu Obeidah, who had resumed the command by order of the Khaliph, advanced against Jerusalem. After a brief resistance, the inhabitants resigned all hope of success, and offered to surrender, if the Khaliph would come in person to receive their submission. Omar having received this proposition, resolved to comply ; and departed from Medina, with an equipage whose simplicity affords a striking contrast to the usual splendour of eastern sovereigns. He was mounted on a red camel, laden with two sacks, in one of which were dried fruits, and in the other parched corn ; before him was a large leather bottle of water, and behind him a large wooden dish. When he reached the camp he preached a sermon on moderation to his soldiers ; and having seen some of the Saracens clothed in silk, he ordered them to be dragged by the heels through the mud, until their splendid garments were torn to pieces.

Sophronius, the patriarch of Jerusalem, was deputed to

arrange the terms of capitulation with the patriarch; the conditions have ever since served as a model to the Mussulmans; it was stipulated that the Christians should be protected in person, property and the free exercise of religion, but that their Churches should be open to every Mohammedan that pleased to enter. No crosses were permitted to be exhibited outside the churches, bells were forbidden to be rung, and religious processions strictly prohibited. Christians were not allowed to make converts, nor to hinder their relatives from embracing Isla'm; they were also forbidden to use the dress, names, and forms of salutation peculiar to Mussulmans. It was further required that every Christian should rise up as a mark of reverence before a Mohammedan, and entertain him three days gratuitously when on a journey. As soon as these terms were ratified the Saracens entered the holy city, Omar marching at their head in familiar conversation with Sophronius, whom the Khaliph was anxious to protect from the fanaticism of his followers. Nor was this the only proof of good faith displayed by Omar, he refused to pray in any of the Christian churches, lest the Mussulmans should take advantage of his example, and convert it into a mosque. He chose the ground on which the Temple of Solomon stood, for the foundation of the mosque that bears his name; and as it was covered with filth of every kind, he set the example of clearing the spot to his soldiers by removing some of the rubbish in his robe.

Aleppo, the ancient Beræa, was the next city besieged by the Saracens; it was valiantly defended for four months, but was finally taken by assault, and its governor, Yu'kinna, with several of his principal officers, embraced the Mohammedan faith. Antioch, the capital of the province, next engaged the attention of the conquerors. Heraclius had lingered within its walls, hoping that some change of fortune might yet drive back the invaders to their deserts; but when he saw the tents of the Saracens clustering round

the beleaguered ramparts, he lost hope, and determined on flight. From the walls of Antioch he gazed in tears on the fruitful valley between the chains of Libanus and Anti-Libanus, and bade a last farewell to a country that had been deservedly regarded as the pride of his empire. Descending into the city he assembled a council, and eloquently bewailed the miserable fate of Syria, which he devoutly attributed to the sins of the prince and the people; then, accompanied by a few domestics, he made his way to the shore, and embarked for Constantinople. The renegade Youkinna, with some of his companions, soon after gained admission into Antioch, pretending that they had escaped from the enemy, and on the approach of the Saracens threw open the gates. It was expected that Cæsarea would have made a formidable resistance, as it was strongly garrisoned, and its governor, prince Constantine, had frequently given proof of his valour and ability; but Constantine imitated the example of his father, and fled in a small vessel by night, to the shores of Thrace. The citizens of Cæsarea laid aside all thoughts of resistance, and capitulated before the enemy was within sight of the walls. Six years had scarcely elapsed since the entrance of the Saracens into Syria, when they were undisputed masters of the entire country. The seventh year brought a dreadful plague, the common attendant on Eastern wars, that destroyed vast numbers of the conquerors and extended its ravages into northern Arabia. Khaled escaped the dangers of war and pestilence, to die of a broken heart. The jealous Omar, encouraged perjured informers to charge the brave warrior with embezzlement: he was condemned to pay enormous fines, and to endure indignities still more mortifying to his proud spirit. At length he sunk under persecution, regretting with his latest breath, that he had not found a soldier's grave in some of the fields of his glory.

Mesopotamia soon shared the fate of Syria; a single

campaign sufficed for its subjugation, and Amru', who now commanded the Saracenic armies, resolved on the conquest of Egypt. The bishop of Alexandria, convinced that his country must soon share the fate of Syria, had secretly entered into negotiations with Omar; Heraclius refused to ratify the prelate's unauthorized proceedings, and he thus afforded the enemy a plausible pretext for invading that province. The intrigues at Medina had nearly rescued Egypt; Omar, influenced by jealousy, wrote to prohibit Amru' from invading that country, but permitted him to persevere if he had passed the frontiers. Amru' received a hint of the Khaliph's designs, he did not open the letter until he reached Rhinocolura, the modern Al Arisch, within the precincts of Egypt, and thus was enabled to avail himself of Omar's permission. The imperial generals struggled manfully to save this valuable province, but their efforts were paralyzed by the intrigues of the bishop, and the disloyalty of the Copts or native Egyptians, who were weary of Byzantine oppression. Amru' was every where victorious, city after city was taken, and at length he appeared before Alexandria, the last hold of the empire in Egypt. Heraclius, during the fourteen months that the siege lasted, made but feeble efforts for its relief; he did not live to witness its fall, but sunk under sorrow and infirmity, in the thirty-first year of his reign. (A.D. 641.) His son Constantine survived him but a few months, and the Byzantines, occupied by the distractions of a disputed succession, abandoned Alexandria to its fate.

At length Alexandria was taken by assault, but the greater part of the garrison escaped on board the vessels in the harbour. Amru' was a generous conqueror; he granted the inhabitants protection of person and property for the payment of a moderate tribute, and he prevented his fanatical followers from defacing the public monuments. Among the treasures of the city was the great library,

founded in the age of Julius Cæsar, after the library of the Ptolemies had been accidentally destroyed by fire; it contained, we are told, more than half a million of books, and the citizens supplicated Amru' to preserve this valuable collection from ruin. He wrote to Omar for instructions on the subject, and received the following reply. "You ask me concerning books; if they contain what is already in the Koran, they are useless; if they contradict that sacred volume, they are pernicious. Cause them therefore to be burned." These barbarous orders were obeyed, and literature thus sustained a loss whose extent can never be estimated. The complete conquest of Egypt presented no difficulty after the capture of Alexandria; it was achieved at a fortunate moment: Arabia was beginning to be desolated by a famine, when Amru' sent an abundance of corn from his fertile conquest, which averted this calamity.

Persia had not escaped from attack, while the Saracens were engaged in Syria; the Arabs, after the subjugation of Irak, crossed the Euphrates, but their efforts were not crowned with their usual success. A desultory warfare was maintained for several years, until Omar, finding Syria secure, resolved to overthrow the throne of Yezdejerd, and extirpate the Magian idolatry. Yezdejerd, hearing of the preparations made against him, sent an envoy to Saad ebn Wakass, the Khaliph's general, and Saad in return ordered three Arab scheiks to wait on Yezdejerd at Al Modain. The interview was a singular specimen of eastern diplomacy. Yezdejerd in a long speech described the Arabs as beggarly lizard eaters, who visited Persia to get a taste of decent food; resentment for their outrages, he said, was checked by pity for their wants, and he generously offered to supply them with provisions for themselves and their families if they would return home. To this strange harangue the ambassadors listened with inflexible gravity; when it was concluded, they stated the divine mission of Mohammed, and offered him his choice,

of the "Koran, tribute, or the sword." The embassy was dismissed, and the Persians prepared for war with all the vigour of which their declining empire was capable.

Ferokhzad, the Persian general, felt but little confidence in his superiority of numbers; he used every artifice of war and negotiation to avoid an engagement, but he was at length forced to a general action in the plains of Cadesia or Kudseah on the borders of the desert. For three days the Persians and Arabs fought with doubtful fortune; on the fourth, the ranks of the former were thrown into disorder by a furious whirlwind which drove clouds of dust into their faces; the Saracens seized the decisive moment to charge, and the Persian army was put to the rout. The slaughter was dreadful, for the disordered lines of the Persians prevented resistance and impeded flight: one hundred thousand of them are said to have fallen, while the loss of the Saracens scarcely amounted to eight thousand. Never had the Arabs obtained such valuable plunder, and numerous were the mistakes that arose from their ignorance of its worth. "I will give any quantity of this yellow money for a little white," exclaimed a son of the desert, anxious to exchange gold, which he had never before seen, for silver, which he had learned to appreciate. But the greatest acquisition of the day was the national standard of Persia, the celebrated blacksmith's apron, which every monarch from the days of Ardeshi'r had enriched with valuable jewels. The battle of Nahavend was still more decisive, the Arab writers call it "the victory of victories," for on this fatal field the monarchy of the ancient Persians was cloven down. Yezdejerd protracted his life a few years as a helpless fugitive, and was finally murdered by a miller with whom he had sought refuge. Thus fell the last sovereign of the house which had governed Persia for more than four centuries. (A.D. 641.) After the flight of Yezdejerd, the conquerors overran the whole of Persia from the Euphrates to the Oxus, destroy-

ing with bigot fary, every historical monument, and every religious edifice. A great portion of the conquered embraced the religion of the victors ; the rest fled into distant lands. The descendants of these exiles, the Parsees, are to be found in almost every trading port on the Indian Ocean. Arabian colonies were planted in various parts of the conquered country, and Persia continued to be a province of the empire of the Khaliphs for more than two centuries, without any effort being made to restore its independence.

While the Persian empire was sinking under the attacks of the Saracens in the east, Amru', was extending the dominion of the Khaliphs over northern Africa ; he had subdued all the countries between the Nile and the desert of Barca, when his career was arrested by intelligence of the assassination of the Khaliph. A Persian slave named Fero'z complained to Omar of some ill-treatment he had received from his master, and not obtaining satisfaction, he assailed the Khaliph in the pulpit at Medina while engaged in morning prayer, and mortally wounded him with a dagger (A.D. 645). The congregation rushed upon the murderer, who made a desperate resistance ; thirteen persons were wounded, seven of them mortally, before he could be subdued, and when he found himself on the point of being overpowered, he stabbed himself, and thus escaped a death by torture.

Omar's memory is held in the highest reverence by the Ivonnees, and deeply execrated by the Shi'ahs. His severity and simplicity, which bordered on barbarism, are strikingly contrasted with the luxury and magnificence of his successors. He had neither palace, court, nor guard, scarcely even a house ; his mornings were spent in the mosque, praying and preaching to the people ; the rest of the day was passed in the public market place, where clothed in an old torn robe, he ate, drank, slept, and received the ambassadors of the princes of the East. His usual food was a preparation of barley, seasoned with

salt, but he frequently, as a penance, laid the salt aside ; his only drink was water. When his meals were served, he invited all present to participate, not disdaining the company of the meanest beggar. But notwithstanding this excessive simplicity, Islamism is indebted to Omar for many of its principal institutions. He erected, as we have already mentioned, the celebrated mosque of Jerusalem ; he enlarged and beautified the mosque of Medina ; he founded several cities, especially Fostat, or Old Cairo, in Egypt ; Cufa and Bassorah, near the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris. By his orders also the ancient canal between the Nile and Red Sea, was repaired, to facilitate the transport of corn from Egypt to Arabia.

To this Khaliph also the Arabs are indebted for the era of the Hejira ; before his time their epochs were wars, famines, plagues, &c. and their chronology consequently a mass of confusion. He was the first to establish a police in Medina and the other great cities of the empire. Before his reign, the Arabs, accustomed to lawless independence, would admit of no restraint, and the immense conquests of the Saracens had caused such a concourse of strangers that the cities were as dangerous residences as the open country. He also established a regular system of pay for the soldiers in the field, and pensions for the wounded or disabled ; the old companions of Mohammed, whom age had rendered incapable of acquiring fresh plunder would have perished miserably but for the provision which Omar made for the support of their declining years.

Though Omar had several children, he refused to nominate any of them his successor, but chose six of the surviving companions of the Prophet to elect a Khaliph. The electors long hesitated between Othman and Ali, who were both sons-in-law of Mohammed, but finally decided in favour of the former, on account of Ali's reluctance to acknowledge the legitimacy of the former Khaliphs.

Othman was a native of Mecca, a member of the same

tribe, but not the same family as Mohammed. He was one of the earliest converts to Islamism, and on account of his great learning was appointed secretary to the Prophet. His zeal, ability, and fidelity, were highly esteemed by Mohammed, who gave him successively two of his daughters in marriage. When he ascended the throne, he had attained his eightieth year, but age seemed not to have abated his vigour. After the example of his predecessors he directed his attention to new conquests; the Mussulman armies acting under his orders completed the subjugation of Persia, to the banks of the Oxus, and the borders of India. Another army directed its march Westward, and subdued Northern Africa, as far as the wastes of the Atlantic. Othman had even the glory of triumphing by sea. A fleet equipped under his orders in the ports of Egypt and Syria, conquered the islands of Cyprus and Rhodes, and menaced the Southern coasts of Europe. Moawiyah, the lieutenant of Syria, who commanded this naval expedition, threw down and destroyed the celebrated brazen Colossus of Rhodes, a gigantic statue of Apollo more than one hundred feet high, erected across the entrance of the harbour, so that vessels sailed between its legs. A Jewish merchant of Edessa purchased the fragments, and the metal furnished loads for no less than nine hundred camels. While the Saracens were thus rapidly establishing an empire, greater than any which the world had yet witnessed, the rulers of Byzantium seemed utterly insensible of the danger with which they were threatened, or the disgrace they incurred; whilst province after province was reft from their sway, civil and religious feuds engrossed their entire attention, and the hundred years during which the Heraclian dynasty endured, offer to the historian nothing but a melancholy record of treason, assassination, and perfidy. It is unnecessary to dwell upon this dark catalogue of crimes, for the Eastern empire had now lost its historical importance.

The wondrous successes of the Saracens produced the usual effect of prosperity. Unbridled luxury spread through every class of Mussulmans; the tribes of the desert, who so recently were almost naked, rivalled the greatest potentates in wealth and splendour. Othman himself accelerated the progress of the corruption to which he finally fell a victim. Naturally mild and liberal, he knew not how to pronounce a refusal; and in his day, as in our own, the most urgent candidates were not always the most worthy. The old companions of the Prophet were neglected for younger and more licentious competitors; it was even complained that honours were bestowed on many who had inveterately opposed the creed of Isla'm.

But it was towards members of his own family that the third Khaliph chiefly displayed his culpable indulgence; every thing was abandoned to them; honours, wealth, and offices of state. The spirit of independence which characterizes every rising religion, was not yet extinct in the bosoms of the Mussulmans; acknowledging no guide or rule but religious sentiment, equality seemed to them not merely a right but a duty. Strong remonstrances were addressed to the Khaliph; they were listened to, and disregarded.

The same disorder spread into religion: as soon as the traditions derived from the Prophet were dimmed by their transmission to a new generation, sects began to be formed in every quarter; one enthusiast preached community of goods, and thus excited the poor against the rich; another announced the speedy re-appearance of Mohammed to remedy the disorders of the state; and by this doctrine increased the popular discontent with the existing government. There was only one source of confusion which Othman exerted himself to remedy. Several copies of the Koran after it had been compiled by Abu Bekr got abroad, and the differences between them threatened to unsettle the foundations of the faith. Othman caused all these

copies to be collected, and destroyed those that differed from the standard edition. This proceeding produced great discontent; and, as he had in some degree changed the established ceremonial of worship also, he was described as a deceiver, a heresiarch, an enemy of God and man.

The democratic form of the government contributed not a little to increase these disorders. Under Mohammed, and the first Khaliphs, nothing of importance was transacted without the consent of the people assembled in the mosque, where all but slaves had a right to give their opinions. Whilst the rulers were men of firmness and authority, no inconvenience resulted from this practice, but under the feeble Othman such a course naturally and necessarily led to unbridled licentiousness. At Medina and in the provinces, public worship was disturbed by angry disputes that frequently came to blows. Othman himself was one day attacked with stones in the pulpit, and was with difficulty rescued from the exasperated congregation.

Parties soon began to be formed. Every province demanded a new governor, every faction a new Khaliph. The ancient companions of the Prophet took the lead in these seditions, urging the Faithful to restore the primitive purity of Islamism. Roused by these solicitations, four thousand of the Egyptian army quitted their quarters and marched on Medina to enforce the reform of abuses. Othman was terrified; he ascended the pulpit, and promised that his administration should in future merit the confidence of the Mussulmans (A.D. 655). Some new governors were appointed to the provinces, and the agitation began to subside. But even this severe lesson was lost upon the Khaliph, he continued to be guided by unworthy favourites, and the insurrections were renewed. Within a year the Egyptian army returned to Medina more furious than before; four thousand soldiers from Cufa and Bussorah joined the standard of revolt; Medina, was filled with confusion, Othman

was besieged in his palace, and deprived of water for several days.

With some difficulty these discontents were again allayed and the soldiers induced to return to Egypt and Babylonia. But on the road the Egyptian troops learned that secret orders had been issued for their massacre, Othman's secretary, without consulting his master, having issued a mandate sealed with the seal of state for the purpose. The soldiers, maddened by this intelligence, retraced their steps; they demanded the head of the secretary; it was refused them; they then directed their vengeance against Othman himself.

Every Friday the Khaliph fasted until he had read the entire Koran; it was on Friday that the insurgents entered Medina, and Othman engaged in his usual pious occupation, made no efforts to avert danger. The soldiers advanced to the palace with drawn swords; five hundred Mussulmans who wished to oppose their entrance were cut in pieces; the Khaliph's wife, while remonstrating, had her hand smote off; the son of Ali, and some of the Prophet's companions who tried to allay the popular fury, were rudely thrust aside. The conspirators burst into the room where Othman was tranquilly reading the sacred volume; they rushed upon him with one accord, and he fell beneath their daggers. His blood gushed over the Koran which he held in his hand, and this volume is still preserved as a relic in the mosque of Damascus. So great was the terror inspired by the revolt that for three days Othman's body lay unburied; it was at last interred by the generous Ali, but secretly and in private ground.

Ali was unanimously elected Khaliph: though he deemed that he had been unjustly passed over before, he showed great reluctance to ascend the throne. During the revolt he had strenuously exerted himself to save Othman, and one of his sons had been severely wounded in defence of that prince. But he could not forget that he had long been

the victim of injustice, and from the very commencement of his reign he unwisely discountenanced those who had favoured the elevation of Omar and Othman. Stimulated by his partisans, he deposed the governors of all the provinces, men who had acquired almost independent power during the reign of Othman, which they were by no means disposed to resign without a struggle. Far the most formidable of these provincial rulers was Moawiyah, the governor of Syria, the son of Abu' Sofian, who had long been the most formidable enemy of Mohammed; when however the Prophet was triumphantly established in Mecca, Moawiyah entered into his service, and shared with Othman the office of secretary. Crafty, yet daring, with conciliatory manners and inflexible resolutions, Moawiyah felt himself designed for empire, and he proclaimed himself the heir and avenger of Othman.

Whilst the clouds of war were gathering on the Syrian frontier, another party appeared against Ali in the very centre of Arabia. Ayesha, the daughter of Abu' Bekr and favourite wife of Mohammed, eagerly desired to resume the power she had exercised during the life-time of her husband and father. She had joined in the revolt against Othman, and was more than consenting unto his death, but the elevation of her personal enemy Ali, was too much for her proud spirit to bear; she also declared herself the avenger of the late Khaliph, and openly charged Ali with the guilt of his assassination. Talba and Zobeir, two of the Prophet's old companions, disappointed in obtaining the elevated stations they had desired, abjured their oaths of allegiance and joined the party of this furious woman. Ali encountered the insurgents near Bussorah; Talba and Zobeir fell in the first charge, but Ayesha, mounted on a camel, sustained the courage of the rebels, and restored the broken ranks. No one would raise his hand against the widow of the Prophet, and for a long time the efforts to take her prisoner were unavailing; at length a daring soldier cut the

sinews of the camel's leg, she fell to the ground, and the battle was at an end. Ali exerted himself to check the carnage, but his partisans could not be restrained until forced to desist by actual weariness. Ayesha was dismissed in safety; Ali scarcely even reproached her; she returned to Medina, where, after some years, she was murdered by order of Moawiyah.

The Syrian rebellion had in the mean time become more formidable; Moawiyah having procured from Medina the bloody shirt of Othman, displayed it as his standard, and this sight had such an effect on the soldiers assembled at Damascus, that, though it was in the middle of summer, thirty thousand of them swore never to taste fresh water until they had avenged the murder of the Khaliph. Amru' the conqueror and governor of Egypt, joined the party of Moawiyah, a man equally celebrated for valour in war, and wisdom in peace, full of craft and duplicity, a stranger to the restraints of conscience.

The two parties met at Saffēin between the course of the Euphrates and Syria; Ali had ninety thousand, his opponent eighty thousand men; neither ventured to hazard a decisive battle, and for more than three months, the strength of both was exhausted in skirmishes and single combats. The personal valour of Ali was eminently conspicuous in this desultory warfare; Moawiyah shunned a spear on whose point death was proverbially said to dwell, but finding his men gradually losing their courage, he placed the Koran on the point of a pike, and riding out in front of the army proposed that the Mussulmans should desist from mutual slaughter, and decide their controversies by the sacred volume. Ali, aware of his advantageous position, would have refused this insidious offer, but his soldiers declared that they would not oppose "God's book," and he was forced to consent to a truce.

Commissioners were appointed to adjust terms of conciliation; Moawiyah selected Amru', the most crafty nego-

ciator of his time ; Ali was not allowed a choice, his tumultuous soldiers having selected Abu' Musa, a pedantic doctor of laws, whose ostentatious devotions had attracted attention. On an appointed day the arbitrators appeared to pronounce their decision in presence of the two armies. The commissioner on the part of Ali, first ascended the pulpit, and, drawing a ring from his finger, said, " I depose Ali and Moawiyah, and deprive them of the Kaliphate in the same manner as I remove this ring." Amru' came next, and placing the ring on his finger, said, " You have heard Ali's deposition pronounced, I confirm it, and I invest Moawiyah with the Khaliphate in the same manner that I draw this ring on my finger."

These words were the signal for a general tumult ; Ali's arbitrator loudly exclaimed that he had been deceived, and called Amru' a liar, traitor and a perjurer ; Amru' coolly replied that the pedant was a donkey laden with books which he did not comprehend, and laughed his remonstrances to scorn. Finally both parties retired equally dissatisfied.

Ali felt that his power had received a mortal blow ; the soldiers who had forced him to open negotiations, ashamed of the result, withdrew from the army ; those who remained, blamed him for wantonly sacrificing his rights. There were some fanatics also who accused him of impiety, in submitting to human arbitration a question which could only be decided by the Almighty. In every province a civil war was waged by the partisans of the rival Khaliphs ; mutual excommunications were daily pronounced in the mosques ; and it became an established rule, that a governor of a province introduced at an audience to either prince should commence his harangue by formal curses of the rival sovereign. Moawiyah's power daily increased ; he took advantage of his rival's falling into the lassitude of despair, and continually assailed him by force or fraud.

Some fanatic Mussulmans met accidentally at Mecca,

and discoursed of the calamities that threatened the ruin of Islamism. One of them remarked, that no one of the claimants of the throne deserved to reign, since they had jointly and severally caused such dreadful calamities. Finally, they resolved to devote themselves for the public welfare, and on the same day to slay Ali, Amru', and Moawiyah. The attempt was made; Amru' remained at home on the fatal day, and his secretary perished in his stead; Moawiyah escaped with a few slight wounds, but Ali perished under the daggers of the assassins. (A.D. 661.) Thus literally was fulfilled the prophecy of Mohammed; unless the tradition be founded on the event, "the Khaliphate will not last more than thirty years after my death."

Ali's memory is justly venerated by the Mussulmans; he appears to have been the most amiable of the Khaliphs, but his yielding disposition was fatal in an age of distraction and civil warfare. His family continued to be revered long after his death; but their popularity excited the jealousy of succeeding Khaliphs, and most of them perished either by open or secret violence. The martyrdom of Hassan and Hossein, the sons of Ali, is yearly celebrated by the Shiahs in India and Persia with great solemnity; and on these occasions the affecting incidents of these events are so vividly represented, that travellers would suppose the bursts of grief they witness to be caused by some recent and overwhelming calamity.

CHAPTER XIV.

Conquests of the Saracens continued.

(From A.D. 661 to A.D. 800.)

HASSAN succeeded his father Ali, but soon became convinced that he could not compete with Moawiyah; to

avert therefore the useless effusion of blood, he resigned his dignity for a pension, and spent the remainder of his life at Medina in acts of unostentatious charity and devotion. After having lived eight years in retirement, he was poisoned by the emissaries of the jealous Khaliph; and with his last breath he ordered that no efforts should be made to discover his murderers, but that they should be left to the justice of Heaven.

Moawiyah, who now ruled without a competitor, was the third in descent from Ommiah, the founder of a family in the tribe of the Koreish; whence this dynasty of Khaliphs is called the Ommiade. The new commander of the faithful soon showed that the removal of the seat of government from Medina to Damascus was not the only change wrought in the empire. He ceased to consult the public assemblies; and he put to death without any form of trial those whom he suspected of hostility to his pretensions. He renewed the war with the Greek empire, and sent his son Yezi'd with a powerful army to besiege Constantinople. (A.D. 663.) The Saracens suffered very severely in their march, but they were animated to surmount all difficulties, by a celebrated tradition, that Mohammed had declared "the sins of the first Moslem army which enters the city of the Cæsars shall be forgiven." Yezi'd took possession of Chalcedon, but seems not to have crossed the straits; he was finally induced to retire by the payment of a large tribute. The Khaliph was less successful in the internal administration of his empire; the Arabs generally regarded him as a usurper elevated to the throne by the Syrians, and were especially indignant at his making the Khaliphate hereditary, by nominating Yezi'd his successor. The vexations occasioned by these jealousies are singularly shown in his last public speech at Damascus, when he felt the symptoms of approaching dissolution: "I am like corn ready for the reaper, and have governed you until we are mutually weary of each other. I am supe-

rior to all my successors, as my predecessors were superior to me. God desires to approach all who are desirous of approaching him. O God ! I love to meet thee, do thou love to meet me."

Yezî'd was proclaimed Khaliph immediately after his father's death (A.D. 680). His first care was to obtain an oath of allegiance from Hossein, the surviving son of Ali; but that prince, relying on the promises of the fickle people of Cufa, took up arms and proceeded with a small train towards Irak. Yezî'd promptly took measures to avert the threatened danger; Hossein was intercepted at Kerbela, surrounded by an overwhelming force, and slain. The Khaliph, however, repented of the share he had in destroying the grandson of the Prophet, and sent the surviving members of Hossein's family in safety to Medina. But the civil war was not thus extinguished; Abdallah, the son of Zobier, was chosen the leader of the partisans of the house of Ali, and numerous armies to support his cause were levied in Arabia and Persia. Moktar, who headed the insurgents in Persia, boasted that he had destroyed fifty thousand enemies of Ali, exclusive of those who fell in battle. The cities of Medina and Mecca embraced the cause of Abdallah; the Khaliph sent the Syrian army to reduce them to obedience; Medina was taken after a single battle; and in the cruel massacre that ensued, six thousand of its principal inhabitants were butchered. Mecca endured a siege of forty days, during which it was battered by the military engines with so much fury that the greater part of its celebrated temple was beaten down, and the rest burned. The city was finally taken by storm; but before its fall, intemperance and debauchery brought Yezî'd to a premature grave (A.D. 681).

Moawiyah II. succeeded his father Yezî'd, but in a few weeks abdicated the throne, ill health rendering him incapable of administering the government. Merwan was chosen in his stead by the Ommiade party in Syria, but

the authority of Abdallah was recognized in Arabia and Egypt. The reign of Merwan was short and troubled; he was murdered by the widow of Yezi'd, whom he had married, on account of his having excluded her son from the succession.

Abd-al-malek was the next Khaliph; his reign was almost one incessant scene of civil wars, but he triumphed over every competitor. Mecca was besieged and taken by his general the celebrated Al Hejaj, and Abdallah, who had opposed the Ommiades for ten years, was slain. The Greeks took advantage of the Moslem distractions to invade Syria; they acquired great plunder but made no permanent impression on the country. Abd-al-malek was the first Saracen sovereign that established a mint; previous to his age, Greek and Persian coins formed the currency of the empire. The remainder of his reign, after the overthrow of Abdallah, was prosperous; the empire of the Mussulmans was extended from the banks of the Indus to the shores of the Atlantic.

Al Walid succeeded his father Abd-al-malek (A.D. 704.) and the abilities he had displayed as a prince, rendered his accession a subject of joy throughout the empire. He abolished the use of the Greek language and characters, which before his accession had been used in all public documents, and ordered his secretaries to substitute the Arabic characters; a change to which we probably owe the numerical figures now used throughout Europe. A great portion of his revenues was employed in decorating the cities of the empire with superb edifices; the most remarkable of these was the mosque of Damascus, the erection of which, independent of its rich furniture, is said to have cost three millions of our money.

But the most important event of this reign was the conquest of the Spanish peninsula. Roderick, the last Gothic monarch of Spain, had cruelly insulted the daughter of Count Julian, one of the most powerful noblemen in

the country ; the count, eager for revenge, sought the assistance of Mu'sa, the Saracen governor of western Africa, and Mu'sa, who had long been eager for some pretext to cross the straits, immediately concluded an alliance with Julian. A body of Moslems sent over under the command of Tarik ebn Zarka, effected a landing near mount Calpe, which, in memory of the event, they named Gebel el Tarik, (the mountain of Tarik,) a name since corrupted into Gibraltar (A.D. 710.) Tarik's success encouraged Musa to follow in the ensuing year with fresh forces, and the greater part of Andalusia was subdued with little difficulty. Roderick was at length roused to defend his kingdom : he encountered the invaders near the town of Xeres, and seven days of incessant fighting produced no decisive result. On the eighth day, two divisions of the Gothic army deserted to the enemy ; the Saracens rushing through the gaps thus opened to them attacked Roderick's flanks, and threw his lines into confusion. After many heroic efforts to restore the fortune of the day, he fled from the field, and was drowned in attempting to cross the Guadalquivir. Tradition with its usual inaccuracy represents him as escaping to the mountains, and atoning for his crimes by a life of severe penance ; and the monarch whom history brands as a weak sensualist has been made a hero of romance.

Fresh crowds of adventurers were invited into Spain by the news of this success, and in a very few years the entire peninsula, with the exception of an obscure mountainous district, was annexed to the Saracenic empire. Emboldened by success, Mu'sa contemplated a still more daring enterprise, the entire subjugation of Europe. He proposed to pass the Pyrenees, overthrow the dynasty of the Franks in Gaul, at that time enfeebled by civil wars ; attack Italy by sea and land, destroy the power of the Lombards, and place a Saracen in the chair of St. Peter ; then forcing a way through Germany to the Danube, he intended to descend that river to the Euxine sea, and form a junction with the

Khaliph's forces under the walls of Constantinople. Walid was daunted by the magnitude of this plan; he was also jealous of Mu'sa's ambition, and prejudiced against that general by the arts of malevolent courtiers. The conqueror of Spain was summoned to Damascus, falsely accused, unjustly convicted, and cruelly punished. The principal charge against him was embezzling the celebrated table of Solomon, which Titus brought to Rome among the spoils of the temple of Jerusalem, whence it was removed by the Goths, who were in their turn forced to resign it to the victorious Saracens. Mu'sa in vain refuted the calumnies of his enemies; he was stripped of all his fortunes, the head of his murdered son, by a refinement of malice, was sent to him in his prison, and he finally died of absolute want;—a melancholy example of the ingratitude of princes.

Solima'n, the brother of Wali'd, succeeded to the Khaliphate, (A.D. 715), and renewed the war with the Greek empire. The Christians in Spain founded two kingdoms; which, though small in extent, were formidable to the Mohammedan conquerors. Constantinople was closely besieged by the Saracens for several months, but they were forced to retire, after having lost more than one hundred thousand men, by pestilence, famine, and the sword.

Omar II. and Yezid II. successively inherited the Khaliphate; but no new conquests were achieved until the close of the reign of the latter, when Zama, the Saracenic governor of Spain, invaded France, and took the city of Narbonne. He was, however, defeated at Toulouse, and lost the greater part of his conquests. But in the reign of Hesham, the next Khaliph, France was subjected to a more dangerous invasion: Abd-al-rahman inheriting the projects as well as the government of Mu'sa, resolved to overwhelm Christendom, and passed the Pyrennees with more than a quarter of a million of soldiers. (A.D. 731).

City after city fell before the barbarous invaders, who spared neither sex nor age. Eudes, duke of Aquitaine, attempted to resist his progress, but was twice routed with dreadful slaughter, and it seemed impossible to save Europe from the supremacy of the Koran. Gaul was weakened by the same causes that had ruined Spain; the nobles, regardless of their feeble sovereign, were engaged in mutual wars; the army, ill paid and worse officered, had lost courage; nationality had been driven from the bosoms of the great bulk of the population by systematic oppression; and the clergy, though abounding in wealth, refused to bear the smallest share in the expense of a war which interested them more than any class in the community. The hopes of Christendom rested on one man, Charles Martel, the illegitimate son of the elder Pepin, who had given signal proofs of wisdom and valour in suppressing several rebellions in Germany and Gaul. Charles reconciled himself to the duke of Aquitaine; and by his personal authority induced the nobles to suspend their private quarrels in this crisis of the empire. After the first great burst of invasion, the progress of the Mussulmans had been checked by the resistance of the cities, and perhaps by the eagerness for plunder which was now the strongest characteristic of the Saracens; nevertheless they had penetrated into the very centre of France, and it was between Tours and Poitiers that Abd-al-rahman was surprised by the appearance of the army of Charles Martel.

For seven days the generals manœuvred in sight of each other to gain the advantages of ground, and, during the skirmishes that accompanied their movements, the light cavalry and archers of the Arabs maintained their wonted superiority. At length, on a Saturday in the month of October, (A.D 732.) the battle was fought which decided whether Europe should own the sway of the Bible or the Koran. Abd-al-rahman commenced the engagement by

of their restoring it to the Lombards if it returned.

Alboin found the passes of the Alps upon the summit of a mountain he pointed out the fertile fields to which their success was the name of Lombardy, and having thus excited them descended into the plain. (A.D. 568.) No city offered to his march; most of the cities were deserted and the terrified inhabitants fled for refuge to islands. Mantua and Milan were besieged. Ticinum, the modern Pavia, which had been held by the Goths, sustained a siege of nearly three months. The conquests of the Lombards were divided into three great duchies; that of Friuli (Forum Julium), which served as a barrier against any further incursions of the barbarians; that of Spoletum in the north, which checked the garrisons of Rome, Ravenna, and other cities that still adhered to the empire; and that of Beneventum in the south of Italy, which was daily extended from sea to sea.

Whilst Alboin was wresting Italy from the Romans, a new war was kindled on the Persian frontier. The Turks descending from their habitations in the mountains, near the source of the Irtysh, here already mentioned, extended their conquests to the west, and rendered themselves masters of the country between the Oxus and Jaxartes; or, as they are now called, the Sihun and Jehun. This country, called Transoxiana by the Romans, and Mawer-er-ruh by the Arabians, both of which names signify the country beyond the Oxus, had long been the entrepôt for the valuable trade between Europe and China. After their conquest by the Turks, sought for by the emperor or supreme chief of the victors, permission was granted for an embassy into Persia, for the purpose of opening communication with that country. Dizaboul, who was the

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one of the furious charges which had so often routed the soldiers of the eastern empire; but he encountered the lines of Germans and northern Franks, men of great personal strength and stature, "of stout hearts and iron hands," against whose "wall of steel," the light troops of the Arabs rushed as inefficaciously as waves against a rock. Charge after charge failed to shake the motionless battalions of the Franks; and at every recoil, the Saracens left their best and bravest, beaten down by ponderous maces and heavy swords. At length, Abd-al-rhman himself fell, and the disheartened Saracens retired to their tents.

Charles, whose heavy blows on this important day are said to have procured for him the name of Martel, or the Hammerer, would have pursued the enemy to their camp, but his weary soldiers held up their arms as a signal that they wanted repose; and they were permitted to sleep on the field, to be ready for a fresh engagement in the morning. The night however was more fatal to the Saracens than the day; the motley tribes that composed their army, unused to defeat, began to reproach each other with cowardice; words led to blows; the host was dissolved, and each leader consulted for his safety by a separate retreat. When morning dawned, it was already too late for pursuit; Martel took quiet possession of the enemy's camp, and divided its rich spoil among his soldiers. The dissensions of the camp extended to Cordova, the Saracenic capital; there could be no regular government until the Khaliph had nominated a successor to Abd-al-rahman, and during the interval anarchy and tumult prevailed to such an extent that no efforts could be made to retrieve the disgrace that had fallen upon the Mohammedans. But the misfortunes of the Saracens in the West were amply compensated by their successes in Asia; their armies crossed the Oxus, subdued the fierce tribes of Turkestan, and the commercial kingdoms of Bokhara and Samarcand and brought under the dominion of the Koran the race that has ever since

supplied its most fanatical supporters. A century had not elapsed since the first encounter of the Arabs with a foreign foe, and their empire already exceeded the most powerful of ancient or modern times, in extent, in wealth, and in unity of purpose.

After the death of Hesham (A.D. 742.) the Khaliphate was successively held by Walid II, Yezid III, and Ibrahim, during whose brief reigns no event of importance occurred. Merivan then usurped the throne, and though a brave and politic prince, he could not satisfy the Moslems, justly indignant at the crimes that had procured his elevation. Insurrections burst forth in Emessa, Damascus, Cufa, and Bussorah; they were suppressed with great difficulty, and punished with the most savage cruelty. But the massacres had a different effect from what the Khaliph expected: throughout the empire there grew up a hatred to the sanguinary despotism of the Ommiades, and a disposition to question their very doubtful title to the crown. The opinions of the discontented wavered between the descendants of Al Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, and of Ali, the fourth legitimate Khaliph; but Ali's posterity had long since sunk into obscurity, while the Abassides were celebrated for their generosity, their military prowess, and their zeal for the propagation of the faith. Mohammed, the grandson of Abbas, had long been engaged in forming a party to support the rights of his house, and from his obscure residence in Syria sent emissaries into the remotest parts of the empire, to secure partisans for an approaching struggle. On the death of Mohammed, his son Ibrahim succeeded to his influence and his claims; he sent Abu Moslem as the representative of his party into Khorassan, and there that intrepid warrior for the first time raised the black standard of the house of Abbas. From this time the parties that rent the Saracenic empire were distinguished by the colours chosen as their cognizance; black was the ominous badge of the Abassides, white of the Ommiades, and green of the

house of Ali, named Fatimites, because descended from Fatima, the wife of Ali and daughter of Mohammed. The rival colours were hoisted in every province of the empire, but the intrepid Abu Moslem maintained the supremacy of the Abassides in Khorassan, and subdued the important province of Khorasm. In the very beginning of the contest Ibrahim fell into the hands of Merivan, and was put to death; but his brother, Abu'l Abbas, surnamed Al Saffa'h, or the sanguinary, succeeded to his place, and boldly assumed the title of Khaliph at Cufa. Merivan immediately levied an army, and marched to meet the forces of his rival. The armies met on the banks of the Zab, near the spot where Alexander finally routed Darius. During the engagement Merivan had occasion to dismount; his horse took fright, wrested the reins from his hands by a sudden start, and ran masterless through the forces. The Syrians seeing the steed without its rider believed that their leader had fallen, and fell into confusion; Merivan in vain tried to remedy the error, and he was forced to join in their flight. The cities of Syria shut their gates against their defeated sovereign; the victors hotly pursued one during whose life they could enjoy no security. The Khaliph, now a hunted wanderer, fled to Egypt, but was tracked by his indefatigable enemies, and murdered in a Christian church where he had sought refuge.

Abu'l Abbas, immediately after his succession, resolved to destroy the entire Ommiade family, and search was made for the princes of that house throughout the empire. Eighty of them were invited to an entertainment at Damascus, and perfidiously murdered. Their bodies were then heaped together, a carpet spread over the ghastly pile, on which the governor of the city and his friends celebrated the triumph of their party by a sumptuous entertainment. The dead did not escape the ferocious hatred of the Abassides; the sepulchres of all the Khaliphs from Moawiyah downwards, with the single exception of that of Omar II,

were forced open, the mouldering contents ignominiously burned, and the ashes scattered to the winds. Abd-al-rahman, the youngest son of Merivan, alone escaped the indiscriminate massacre: after a series of almost incredible escapes, he reached Spain, where the Saracens, fondly attached to the house of Moawiyah, chose him for their sovereign, and he thus became the founder of the second dynasty of the Ommiade Khaliphs.

But it was not to the Ommiades alone that Abu'l Abbas exhibited the cruelty which earned him the title of "sanguinary;" Abu Moslem, to whom the Abassides were so deeply indebted, was assassinated; the descendants of Ali were cruelly persecuted, and the Khaliph's death (A.D. 753) was hailed throughout the empire as a deliverance. Al Mansu'r, his brother, succeeded, and immortalized his name by the erection of the city of Bagdad, which for nearly five centuries, continued to be the splendid metropolis of the Khaliphs of the house of Abbas. After a long, and on the whole a glorious reign, he was succeeded by his son Al Mohdi, a prince of great merit, whose virtues and abilities tended greatly to restore the stability of the empire. But during his reign appeared the most formidable of those impostors, who, claiming each to be the promised Director, that is to restore the purity of the faith, have frequently threatened the ruin of Islamism. This celebrated adventurer was called Al Mokanna, or the veiled prophet of Khorassan, because he wore a mask to conceal his deformity, but, as he pretended, to save his disciples from being dazzled by the supernatural effulgence of his countenance. Mokanna's faction acquired such strength that the Khaliph was compelled to attack him with the whole force of the empire. The impostor was finally reduced to great distress, and besieged in his last fortress, where he poisoned his followers, and destroyed himself by leaping into a barrel of *aqua fortis*, which consumed all his body except his hair. This strange mode of suicide was probably chosen

with the intention of perpetuating his imposture; and it had the effect, for the greater part of his disciples during several years proclaimed that he still survived, and would return to bestow on his faithful followers the empire of the universe.

Under the first Khaliphs of the house of Abbas, especially Haroun al Raschid, the hero of the Arabian Tales, Al Mamu'n, and Al Motassem, the court of Bagdad was the most magnificent and enlightened which the world could then exhibit. Learned men from all parts of the world were invited to share the patronage of the Khaliphs; the most celebrated Greek treatises on science were translated into Arabic, and academies for public instruction were established in various parts of the empire. The Ommiade Khaliphs in Spain emulated their enemies, the Abassides of Bagdad, in the encouragement of literature and science. Cordova, Seville, and Grenada, rivalled each other in the magnificence of their academies, colleges and libraries. Great indeed were the calamities that the Saracens had brought upon the civilized world, but the benefits they conferred upon civilization were equally great, for to them we owe the revival of learning, which the northern barbarians had driven from Christendom, and the foundation of the experimental sciences, whose full development is the glory of our own age.

But amid all the magnificence and glory of the Abassides, the strength of the empire gradually decayed. Spain was rent from it by the Ommiades; Western Africa exhibited a new Khaliphate founded by the Aglabites, who after a brief rule gave way to the Fatimites; and this latter dynasty obtained possession of Egypt. Petty monarchies were established in different parts of Persia, Khorassan, and Transoxiana, and at length the mighty empire of the Saracens became a mere shadow and an empty name.

CHAPTER XV.

Separation of Italy from the Eastern Empire—Establishment of the Papacy.

(From A.D. 711. to A.D. 802.)

AFTER the extinction of the Heraclian dynasty at Constantinople, (A.D. 711.) an interval of six years occurred, which, though nominally divided into three reigns, was really without any settled government. The army in the East invested Leo their general, an Isaurian by birth, whom merit had raised from the ranks, with the imperial purple, and all the competitors for the throne yielded to his superior talents. He found at his accession the fortunes of the empire at their lowest ebb; the Asiatic provinces were fast falling before the Saracens, Constantinople itself was threatened with a siege, and Italy was on the point of renouncing its allegiance. The Lombards, long weakened by intestine divisions, were re-united under Luitprand, (A.D. 712.) the most deservedly celebrated of their monarchs, equally distinguished by his abilities in the cabinet and the field. Those parts of Italy that had not yet submitted to the Lombards, harassed by the exactions of the imperial exarchs, looked either to Luitprand or the Pope for protection, convinced that little regard would be paid to the complaints of provincials, by the court of Constantinople. Gregory II., one of the most prudent prelates that ever filled the chair of St. Peter, took advantage of the crisis to extend and confirm the papal authority; acknowledging indeed and supporting the supremacy of the Byzantine emperors, but only because he dreaded the rising power of the Lombards. The first enterprise of Leo was the deliverance of Constantinople, which the Saracens had closely besieged by sea and land. Moslemah remained before the walls until his fleet was destroyed,

his army wasted by pestilence, and his supplies intercepted ; he retreated through a country exhausted by his own previous ravages ; he was defeated on his march by the Bulgarians, his remaining ships were wrecked by tempest, and the calamities that the Saracens endured in this retreat were the severest that had yet befallen the cause of Islamism. (A.D. 718.) The Khaliph vented his rage in a cruel persecution of the Christians, and the third siege of Constantinople is still marked by tradition, as one of the most gloomy periods in the annals of the east.

The glory which Leo obtained by the deliverance of the capital, diffused joy throughout the empire ; it was fondly hoped, that he would revive the days of the Cæsars and Constantines, and drive back the barbarians to their deserts and forests. Unfortunately for such hopes, he directed his attention to the reformation of religion, and his injudicious efforts, though well intended, spread tumult and confusion throughout his dominions. His great object was to abolish the worship of images, which the Jews and Saracens made a subject of just reproach to the Christians. This abuse had stolen into the Christian Church by insensible degrees ; at first, there was a natural desire to preserve the likenesses of the saints and martyrs, who had adorned Christianity by their lives, and confirmed it by their deaths. Avaricious and crafty priests next pretended to have found original portraits of Christ, his mother, and his apostles, the reverence with which these were regarded soon gave place to superstitious veneration, the progress of corruption was too profitable to be checked, miraculous powers were attributed to these images and pictures, until at length every city had its tutelary saint as in the days of paganism it had its tutelary deity, and a Christian church differed little in outward appearance from a heathen temple. The conquest of the Saracens had greatly shaken the confidence of the Greeks in their patron saints ; the cities of Syria and Palestine, together with the miraculous

images on which they relied for protection, fell together into the hands of the Arabs, and many believed that the calamities of the empire were the signs of the vengeance which God had pronounced against idolaters.

This corruption had not made its way into the remote and mountainous provinces; so late even as the twelfth century, the Armenians viewed the worship of images with horror: Leo had therefore no prejudices of education to overcome, and his reason at once yielded to the arguments of those who wished to restore the purity of Christianity. Ten years, however, elapsed before he ventured openly to attack the prevailing superstition; but when once he began, he proceeded with the firmness and energy that so strongly marked his character. He assembled the senate of Constantinople, (A.D. 726.) and declared that "in gratitude for the benefits he had received from God since his elevation to the throne, he had resolved to abolish the idolatry which had crept into the church; that the images of Jesus Christ, the virgin, and the saints, were mere idols, to which the worship was offered, of which God was jealous; that as emperor he was the head of the Church, as well as of the state; that it was equally his right and his duty to reform abuses, and that in consequence he had prepared an edict to purify the Church from this superstitious sacrilege." Immediately afterwards he published the edict, and issued orders for its strict execution.

The whole empire was instantly thrown into disorder. Germanus the patriarch of Constantinople, and the eloquent John of Damascus, denounced the Iconoclast, or image-breaker, as Leo was henceforth called, in terms more consistent with their zeal than their allegiance; the pope echoed their denunciation in the West, and addressed a letter of remonstrance to Leo, that might almost be construed into a declaration of war. The emperor, though disturbed by tumults in all the cities of the east, and an actual rebellion in the Grecian islands, replied to the menaces of

Gregory, by confiscating the possessions of the Roman Church in Sicily, Apulia, and Calabria; abolishing the pope's jurisdiction over the provinces, and sending a powerful armament to enforce the execution of his edict. The imperial fleet was wrecked in the Adriatic, and this calamity was of course ascribed to Divine interference. In the midst of these commotions, Leo attempted to levy a new capitation tax; the pope again remonstrated, pleading the poverty of the Italian provinces, and was consequently regarded as the patron and protector of the oppressed. The Italians eagerly clung to him; every city chose a duke or a chief, and nothing was wanting but the formal authority of the church to sanction the insurrection. Gregory II. was too cautious to take this decisive step, but his successor Gregory III. possessed more courage and ambition; he assembled a council at Rome, in utter defiance of the imperial authority. (A.D. 732.) Ninety-three bishops joined the clergy of Rome in this assembly; the nobles and magistrates of the city joined them, and shared in their deliberations. Leo was solemnly excommunicated, the Italians authorized to refuse taxes, and defend themselves by force of arms, and the independence of the Church firmly asserted. An alliance was formed between the pope and Luitprand, whose interests were hostile to those of the emperor; and the Romans and Lombards fell together upon the exarchates. Luitprand conquered Ravenna and Sutri; he gave the latter city to the apostles Peter and Paul, that is to say, to the Romish church, and thus laid the first foundation of the temporal power of the popes.

But the positions of the parties were suddenly changed by a new and unexpected incident. Trasimond, duke of Spoleto, probably believing that he might in these troubled times carve out a kingdom for himself, revolted against the king of the Lombards, and was strenuously supported by Gregory. The pope was now alarmed at his own success;

he had subverted the nominal authority of the Greek emperors, but he had reason to fear that it would be seized by Luitprand, a sovereign by no means disposed to submit to ecclesiastical usurpations. Acting upon these impressions, he urged the rising republic of the Venetians to drive the Lombards from Ravenna, and give shelter to Trasimond, whose rebellion had been unsuccessful. Luitprand immediately made terms with the exarch, and supported by the imperial forces, now reduced to act as auxiliaries, laid siege to Rome. The pope had recourse to Charles Martel, whose victory over the Saracens at that time filled Christendom with admiration ; but the state of France prevented the ambitious Charles from seeking new laurels in Italy.

Soon after this strange exhibition of two subjects, the pope and the mayor of the palace, negotiating without any reference to their respective masters, death removed three of the actors in these important events from the scene. Leo, Gregory, and Charles Martel died in the same year, (A.D. 741.) bequeathing war and desolation to Europe.

Constantine, surnamed Copronymus, succeeded to the throne of Constantinople, and to more than his father's zeal against images. He was an active enterprising monarch, and during the course of his long reign, not only sustained the declining empire, but recovered many important provinces from the Saracens. These merits, however, could not atone for his enmity to the popular superstitions. Artabazus, who had married the daughter of Leo, encouraged by the clergy and the monks, took advantage of the emperor's absence to assume the purple, and his usurpation was universally sanctioned in Greece and Italy. Constantine deserted the Saracenic war to extinguish this formidable revolt ; supported by his brave Isaurians he easily defeated the degenerate Greeks, and after a brief siege, regained possession of his capital. The usurper and all his adherents were punished with the usual oriental cruelty, and

Constantine resolved to pursue his measures of ecclesiastical reform with fresh vigour. But the emperor's success in Greece produced very little effect in Italy; pope Zachary was firmly resolved to maintain the worship of images at all hazards, and by his unrivalled political skill was enabled to set the emperor at defiance. The papal authority had been gradually increasing for a series of years, and had now acquired such strength, as to have the chief influence in the greatest revolution that had taken place in western Europe, since the foundation of the Frankish monarchy.

Nearly in the same year that the Ommiade khalihs were driven from the Saracenic throne by the Abassides, the last descendant of Clovis was forced to yield the monarchy of the Franks to a new race of sovereigns. In Asia the deposed monarch was murdered, in France he was made a monk. Pepin, the son of Charles Martel, inherited almost royal authority, but discontented with the title of mayor of the palace, he wished to possess the name as well as the power of a king. Having gained over by liberal promises the principal bishops of France, he sent an embassy to pope Zachary, requesting a religious sanction for his proposed usurpation. The pontiff solemnly pronounced that the regal title ought to be united to regal power; Childeric, the last of the Merovingian kings, was formally deposed and shut up in a monastery; Pepin was elected in his stead, and crowned at Soissons. (A.D. 751.) Thus the Church conferred a kingdom, but it soon appeared, that it had stipulated the conquest of another for itself, as the price of its interference.

Astolphus, king of the Lombards, resolved to complete the projects of his predecessors, and acquire the entire of Italy, invaded the imperial provinces while Constantine was engaged in war with the Saracens. Before the emperor could provide for the protection of his western dominions, the exarchate, which had now endured one hundred and eighty five years, was irrecoverably lost, and the duchy

of Rome alone remained free from the Lombard rule, between the Adriatic and Tuscan seas. Pope Stephen II. sent ambassadors to demand from Astolphus the restoration of those domains, which the emperor had granted to the Church in the exarchate: the Lombard king not only refused compliance, but threatened to level Rome with the ground, unless both the clergy and citizens recognized his authority, by the payment of tribute. Stephen having vainly sought aid in Constantinople, applied for assistance to Pepin, and on receiving an encouraging answer, passed the Alps to hasten the preparations of the Franks.

The interview between Stephen and Pepin was fraught with important consequences; the monarch of the Franks was absolved from the guilt of perjury, which he had incurred by dethroning Childeric; and the ceremony of his coronation was repeated, the pope consecrating the new monarch, his wife, and two sons. Pepin on the other hand engaged to deprive the Lombards of their recent acquisitions, and bestow them on Saint Peter and his successors. It is very difficult to justify this transaction; the king gave, and the pope received, what rightfully belonged to the emperor of Constantinople, whom the pope still acknowledged as his rightful sovereign. Constantine, indeed, was regarded as a heretic, and was besides scarcely in a condition to defend his western provinces, but neither his heresy nor his weakness gave others a right to dispose of his dominions. Pepin was not slow in executing his part of the agreement; having vainly tried the effects of negotiation, he forced the passage of the Alps, cut to pieces the Lombard army, besieged Astolphus in Pavia, and forced him to pay the expenses of the war, and resign his conquests to the pontiff.

Constantine was more engaged in checking the worship of images, than in attending to the revolutions of Italy. He summoned a general council at Constantinople, (A.D. 754.) which was attended by three hundred and thirty-

eight bishops, to pronounce definitively on this controverted question. After a session of several months, the worship of images was unanimously condemned, but the invocation of saints was declared to be a harmless, if not a pious practice. Stephen and the bishops of the western Churches refused to recognize the council of Constantinople, and the remonstrances of the emperor only strengthened their purpose of securing the independence of western Europe. But Astolphus was an enemy more formidable than Constantine, and the shadow of the imperial authority was preserved as some check on the ambition of the Lombard king. Scarcely had Pepin withdrawn, when Astolphus not only refused to yield up his conquests, but seized on new portions of the pontifical territories, and finally laid siege to Rome itself. The urgent entreaties of Stephen again brought Pepin into Italy; the Lombards, seized with terror, assented to conditions harsher than before; and the pope, now throwing off the mask, boldly informed the Greek ambassadors that the former possessions of their master had become the patrimony of St. Peter. Thus the Byzantine empire lost the greater part of its Italian provinces, retaining only the duchies of Naples, Apulia, Calabria, the Bruttian districts, and the nominal sovereignty of Rome.

After the death of Astolphus, who did not long survive his degrading submission to the Franks, Desiderius ascended the throne of the Lombards, and endeavoured to recover by policy the lost influence of his nation. Embassadors from the papal, imperial, and Lombard courts intrigued in the palace of Pepin, and endeavoured to procure the assistance of the Franks for their respective masters. The death of Pepin (A.D. 768.) did not interrupt the efforts of these diplomatists; his sons Karl* and Karlmann were subjected to similar solicitations; and thus

* Karl, a strong man.

taught that they held the balance of power in their hands. Karl, or as the name is now usually written, Charles, seemed to have decided the fate of Italy, by uniting himself in marriage with Desiderata, the daughter of the Lombard monarch, in spite of the remonstrances of pope Stephen III, but he repudiated her, without assigning any reason, at the end of a year; and these nuptials, which seemed to promise a close union between the Lombards and Franks, became the source of mutual offence, hatred and vengeance. On the death of Karl-mann, Charles took possession of his estates, disregarding the rights of his nephews; Desiderius invited the young princes with their mother to Pavia, and afforded them a secure asylum.

Whilst the jealousies of the Franks and Lombards were continually increasing, the death of pope Stephen III. made room for the election of the most able pontiff that had yet occupied the chair of Saint Peter. From the time of Gregory III., the popes had been rapidly advancing towards the acquisition of temporal power. Five pontiffs in succession, equally remarkable for their rigid purity in private life, and for their ambition and crafty policy in public, had ably profited by the unpopularity of the Iconoclast emperors, and the dread of the enterprising Lombards, to weaken the power of both, and raise ecclesiastical supremacy on their ruins. They had secured the ardent affection of the Roman citizens, and indeed of all the native Italians, and they had acquired invincible protectors in the new monarchs of the Franks. Adrian I. completed the great work his predecessors had commenced by placing a monarch on the throne of the Cæsars, bound by gratitude and interest to extend the influence of the holy see. He found in Charles, or, as he is more commonly called, Charlemagne, sufficient zeal to sacrifice his own interests for those of the Church, sufficient strength to destroy the Lombards, and sufficient glory to eclipse the antiquated splendour of the empire.

Soon after Adrian's election, he received an embassy

from Desiderius soliciting his friendship; the pope replied by reproaches against the Lombards for not having resigned the stipulated lands to the church, and threats of immediate vengeance. Desiderius immediately had recourse to arms, and led his troops towards Rome, intending to force the pope to crown and consecrate the sons of Karlmann. Adrian applied to Charlemagne for assistance, and in the meantime threatened to excommunicate the Lombard monarch if he advanced a single step towards the Roman dominions. Desiderius, terrified by a menace which had already become formidable, halted in the midst of his career, and the crafty pontiff contrived to amuse him with negotiations, until Charlemagne had crossed the Alps. The Lombard army was totally defeated, and Desiderius forced to shut himself up in Pavia. As the city was strongly fortified, Charlemagne was forced to blockade rather than besiege it; and having secured all the approaches, he left his army to the care of his generals and went to keep the festival of Easter at Rome.

Adrian received Charlemagne with all the solemnity of a religious triumph; monks and young nobles bearing branches in their hands preceded the monarch as he entered the city, singing "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord," and the pope walked by his side as he went to pay his devotions at the tomb of St. Peter. The monarch in his turn confirmed the grants that his father had made to the pontiffs. The surrender of Pavia and Verona, soon after the festival, put an end to the kingdom of the Lombards, which had lasted more than two hundred years. Desiderius and his family were sent prisoners to France; but history does not inform us of the fate of the widow and children of Karlmann. In this revolution, the Byzantine emperors entirely lost the hopes they previously entertained of recovering the exarchate, and were forced to content themselves with their provinces in southern Italy.

Constantine Copronymus can scarcely be blamed for

the loss of Italy ; during his entire reign he was harassed by wars with the Bulgarians on his northern frontier, and the Saracens in Asia. His zeal in the destruction of images, which passed all bounds of discretion, was viewed with almost as much horror in Greece as in Italy ; and had he sought to recover the provinces of the west, he would have seriously perilled the empire of the east. His death (A.D. 775.) is said to have been accelerated by intemperance ; but this is probably one of the many calumnies which the worshippers of images have heaped on the memory of the stern Iconoclast.

Copronymus was succeeded by his son Leo IV., whose brief reign offers nothing remarkable. On his death, Constantine VI. ascended the throne under the guardianship of his mother Irene ; a woman equally remarkable for her abilities, her crimes, and her misfortunes. She not merely permitted the worship of images, but restored those that had been destroyed by the preceding sovereigns ; a measure that procured her the warm support of the monks, and a great portion of the clergy. In the early part of the regency, her vigorous administration secured tranquillity at home, and respect abroad ; but when Constantine approached maturity, he was stimulated by the courtiers to take the reins of government into his own hands. Irene was deposed, and dismissed to a life of solitude. Constantine was soon found unfit to rule, a conspiracy was formed to restore Irene ; the emperor was seized, and cruelly blinded by command of his ambitious mother. He survived this cruel operation many years, and the Isaurian dynasty was extinguished without attracting the slightest observation. Irene enjoyed the empire, won by her unnatural crime, about five years ; and during this period, Constantinople was more tranquil and prosperous than it had been for several centuries. She was finally dethroned by her treasurer Nicephorus, and sent a miserable exile to Lesbos (A.D. 802) ; the usurper refused to make any

provision for her subsistence, and during the remainder of her chequered life she was forced to earn a scanty support by manual labour.

The empire of the East had now lost its influence in the politics of Europe ; and we must therefore direct our attention to the re-establishment of the empire of the West by Charlemagne.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Life of Charlemagne—Establishment of the Empire of the West.

(From A.D. 772. to A.D. 814.)

FROM the close of the eighth, to the middle of the eleventh century, Europe and Asia, together with the northern part of Africa, were occupied and disputed by the Greeks, the Saracens and the Franks. Wealth, knowledge, implicit submission to a single head, and a capital almost impregnable, enabled the Greeks to bear up against their more valiant and vigorous competitors : they were inferior in the field, but they generally maintained their superiority by sea ; perseverance in some degree supplied the place of valour ; no men more patiently sustained a siege or blockade, and their possession of the secret for manufacturing the celebrated Greek fire was frequently the salvation of their city and their empire. Bigotry nerved the arms and fired the spirit of the Saracens ; they deemed themselves the chosen warriors of God, and entered battle with the expectation of plunder if they lived, and eternal happiness if they fell. Fanaticism, however, is rarely permanent ; when repulsed, the Saracens believed themselves deserted by God ; and it was impossible to rally their broken lines. The decline of the Khaliphate also had divided the empire into political and religious parties, who hated each other

more violently than their common enemies. The Franks still retained many of the characteristics which distinguished their ancestors when they issued from the forests of Germany; passionately attached to war, they were ever ready to join in any expedition proposed by their leaders; as passionately attached to freedom, they rejected the restraints of discipline, and abandoned the standard of their chief without scruple, if he attempted to keep them in the field beyond the stipulated term of their service. They despised civilization, with which they were not wholly unacquainted, and sought a sovereign "who sealed treaties with the pommel of his sword, and made them respected by its point," instead of a legislator or politician. Charlemagne to the qualities popular among his countrymen added those of an able statesman; and by this rare union of military and civil virtues, was enabled to found an empire worthy to compare with that of Rome.

The dominions that Charles inherited from his father comprised that part of Gaul included between the Rhine, the Loire, the British and the Italian seas. Aquitain, Gascony, and Brittany were virtually independent states. The portion of Germany inhabited by the Franks was bounded by the Rhine, the Saal, and the territories of the Saxons and Bavarians. The dominions of the Saxons, as then considered, were of vast extent; they were bounded on the west by the German ocean, by Bohemia on the east, the Baltic sea on the north, and by Germanic France extending along the lower Rhine, and from the Issel beyond Mentz, on the south. This territory was divided into three parts, Westphalia on the ocean, Est or Eastphalia, bordering on Bohemia and Angria, which joined the territory of the Franks. These provinces were inhabited by a great diversity of pagan tribes, each commanded by its own chief or duke; hence arose constant wars. Whenever a few mutinous dukes combined together, they made inroads into the Frank territories; and when these injuries were retaliated, all the Saxons were involved in the

consequences. Religion was another source of their turbulence; the Saxons were bigotted in heathenism, they worshipped the god of war, and sacrificed all who refused to share in their barbarous rites.

The early part of the reign of Charlemagne gave little promise of its future glory; his marriages, his divorces, his disputes with his brother, and his unjust occupation of his nephews' inheritance, seemed to mark him as a man abandoned to his passions, who believed that his elevation to the throne placed him above the restraint of the laws. But the war in which he engaged with the Saxons (A.D. 772.) first developed those military talents which rendered him dear to his nation and his soldiers, which accustomed the Franks to regard themselves as a single people, and induced them to correct those faults in their constitution which delayed their decisions and impaired their vigour.

A missionary, Saint Libuinus, had vainly attempted to convert the Saxons, and had denounced the vengeance of heaven against their idolatry; the Pagans spared the missionary, but irritated by his reproaches, they burned the church that had been erected at Daventer, and slew the christians assembled there. The general convocation of the Franks, called from the time of meeting the Champ de Mai, was at this time assembled at Worms, under the presidency of Charles; its members regarded the massacre at Daventer as a just provocation, and war was declared against the Saxons. The assembly of the Champ de Mai was at once a convention of the states, and a review of the military power of the Franks; Charles had consequently an army in readiness, with which he entered the Saxon territories, laid them waste with fire and sword, and destroyed their great national idol, Hermansul*. He then returned, covered with glory, to the banks of the Weser.

* *Heer-man-saüle*, the statue of Heer-man, or the statue of the armed man.

The Saxons had sought and obtained peace on easy conditions; but while Charlemagne was engaged in war with the Lombards in Italy, they renewed their incursions with more vigour and cruelty than before. Again they were invaded, again routed with great slaughter, and forced to admit French garrisons into their strong holds, and again they seized the earliest opportunity of renewing the war. Charlemagne severely punished the revolt, and to prevent such occurrences in future, proclaimed that the assembly of the Champ de Mai should be convened at Paderborn, in the very middle of the Saxon territories. (A.D. 777.) The Saxons, as well as the Franks, were summoned to this assembly; those who had not been already baptized submitted to that ceremony, and all acknowledged the monarch of the Franks as their liege lord, with the distinct understanding that they should forfeit their country and their liberty if they violated their engagements. Witikend, the most celebrated of the Westphalian petty sovereigns, refused to attend this assembly; he sought refuge in Scandinavia, the inhabitants of which were at this time called indifferently Danes or Normans, and sought the aid of king Siegfried in liberating and avenging his country.

Whilst Charles was thus engaged at Paderborn, he received an embassy from Ibn al Arabi, the Mussulman governor of Saragossa, soliciting his protection. The establishment of the Omniade khaliphate at Cordova was regarded by many of the Mohammedans as an impious disunion of the empire of Isla'm, and many efforts were made to re-unite Spain to the dominions of the Khaliphs of Bagdad. Abd-al-rahman, however, triumphed over his rivals, and the partisans of the Abassides had no hope of escaping his vengeance but in the protection of the Franks. Charlemagne eagerly embraced the opportunity of extending his dominions in Spain; two Frank armies crossed the Pyrennees, and united under the walls of Sara-

gossa, which was forced to surrender. Several other cities, including Barcelona, voluntarily placed themselves under the protection of the christian sovereign. Intelligence of Witikend's arrival in Saxony, and of his successful exhortations to his countrymen to throw off the yoke, recalled Charlemagne from Spain. He had subdued the greater part of the country between the Pyrennees and the Ebro, but he imprudently changed all the governors, and established Frank counts in all the cities of the Spanish marches. The Saracens who had invited the Franks were alienated by these proceedings; but they were still more displeasing to the petty christian kings who maintained their independence in the mountains. The sovereigns of Navarre and Asturias placed themselves under the protection of Abd-al-rahman, declaring that if they joined with Charlemagne, he would distribute their cities among his nobles. No sooner had they learned that the Franks were about to traverse their mountains a second time, on their return to Gaul, than they concerted with the Saracens and Gascons a combined attack upon their army.

The celebrated valley of Roncesvalles is the line of communication between France and Navarre; the road through it is rugged and tortuous, with narrow gorges, between steep mountains. Whilst the Franks were toiling through these defiles, the Gascons and Navarrese formed ambuscades on the summits of the mountains, concealed by the thick forests with which they abound. After the greater part of the army had past, the mountaineers suddenly rushing down the steepes, fell upon the rear guard and the divisions entrusted with the charge of the baggage. The Franks were surprised but not disheartened; they made a desperate resistance, and vainly tried to cut their way to the main body; but the assailants had the advantage of a light equipment and a favourable position; the whole rear-guard was cut off and the baggage plun-

dered, before Charlemagne knew that they were endangered ; and the mountaineers disappeared so rapidly with their booty that all pursuit was rendered unavailing. Such was the battle of Roncesvalles, so strangely exaggerated and misrepresented by the writers of romance.

This defeat was more than compensated by a series of brilliant victories over the Saxons, who were again reduced to obedience. To secure the submission of these turbulent tribes, Charlemagne instituted the rich and powerful German prelacies, invested with almost all the rights of sovereignty, which for more than ten centuries subjected a warlike nation to the rule of priests and monks. (A.D. 780.) He supposed that these ecclesiastical governors would be more faithful and less turbulent than the military counts whom he established in other countries ; experience, however, soon proved that they were not less ambitious. The conquests of Charlemagne worked a great change in the state of society ; they finally led to the extinction of a free peasantry, and the cultivation of the land by vassals whose condition was little superior to that of slaves. Every new acquisition of territories gave the king estates to distribute among his servants, and their ambition increased with their possessions. In the ideas of this age jurisdiction and sovereignty were so confounded with the rights of property, that each of the duchies and lordships he gave his captains was regarded not merely as a government but a patrimony, more or less covered with slaves who laboured only for the benefit of their masters. The Saxons were unwilling to bear so harsh a yoke ; they revolted on every opportunity ; it required three years of incessant warfare, the massacre of their bravest warriors, and the complete desolation of their territories, to put an end to their efforts for regaining their independence.

We have already related the conquest of the Lombards by the Franks, at the instigation of the Roman pontiffs, and the means by which the popes were elevated to the

rank of temporal princes ; circumstances seemed favourable to the establishment of the papal power over the entire peninsula ; the swords of the Franks were sufficient to reduce the provinces still held by the Greeks and Lombards, and the facility with which Charles had resigned his former conquests to the pope, seemed to warrant the belief that he would in a new campaign display similar liberality. But the king had discovered the great value of his donatives, and when he next crossed the Alps, he hastened to conclude a treaty with the duke of Benevento, by which the Lombard prince was secured in his possessions, on condition of holding them as a vassal of the king of the Franks. (A.D. 787.) Tassilon, duke of Bavaria, was alarmed by the great increase of the power of Charlemagne : like the duke of Benevento, he had married a daughter of Desiderius, the last king of the Lombards, and this princess strenuously urged him to revenge the misfortunes of her family. Whilst Charlemagne was in Italy, the duke negotiated with the Slavonian tribes to unite with him in the invasion of Italy and Gaul ; but unfortunately for him his intrigues were discovered before his projects were ripe for execution. Charlemagne on the first intelligence of the danger passed the Alps, and advanced towards Bavaria, with all the forces of his kingdom. Tassilon, unable to resist, submitted on the single condition of receiving a fair trial before the general assembly of the Franks. At the next assembly of the Champ de Mai, the duke was convicted of treason on the clearest evidence, and condemned to death. Charlemagne spared the duke's life, but compelled him, his wife, his son, and his two daughters to embrace a monastic life ; his principal supporters were at the same time driven into exile.

Though Charlemagne was himself uneducated, and could not even write his name, he was thoroughly convinced of the advantages of knowledge, and laboured to establish seminaries of learning throughout his dominions, nor did

he lose sight of this great object, even when engaged in wars with the Slavonians, the Huns, and the Saracens. The Slavonians were divided from the Franks by the Elbe, but this river was not a sufficient barrier against mutual desire for plunder. Scarcely had war commenced when the Saxons, after eight years of tranquillity, again revolted, and burned down Christian churches that had been erected in their country. The king himself undertook the chastisement of the insurgents, and at the same time sent his son Pepin against the Huns and Avars, who possessed the modern kingdom of Hungary. (A.D. 796). Pepin would have found this a dangerous expedition had not the Huns, divided by civil dissensions, refused to unite against their common enemy. At the head of an army of Lombards and Bavarians, the young prince advanced into Pannonia from Italy, crossed the Danube and the Theiss with little difficulty, and at length reached the great Ring, or fortified enclosure in which the Huns, who had no cities, preserved their accumulated plunder. Pepin stormed this national treasury, and brought its immense wealth to his father, who distributed it to his officers and courtiers. Saxony was punished for its revolt, by annual desolation; vast numbers of its inhabitants were torn from their homes, and sent into distant provinces, its forests were destroyed, and its villages burned. But these ravages were compensated by the foundation of cities, and by the increased attention paid to agriculture after the woods were removed; the devastations of a merciless war that lasted twenty-six years were effaced in northern Germany before the next generation, and Saxony was found superior in wealth, power, and civilization to Gaul, by which it had been subdued.

Irene, the empress of Constantinople, sent ambassadors to treat of peace with Charlemagne; Alphonso II., king of the Asturias, transmitted to him regular accounts of his triumphs over the Saracens, as if to his superior lord; but a more gra-

tifying circumstance was the arrival of pope Leo III. in the Frank camp at Paderborn, to solicit the king's protection, and his aid in punishing the rebellious Romans. Charlemagne prepared for this fresh expedition into Italy, by taking precautions to preserve the tranquillity of his several provinces, and for this purpose he visited Gaul, which had long ceased to attract his attention. It is necessary to remark that Charlemagne was a German, rather than a Frank sovereign; his language was Teutonic, his capital was Aix la Chapelle, and his soldiers were all of the Teutonic race. France, properly so called, was regarded as a mere province, and by no means as the most valuable belonging to the Franks.

In the close of the year 800, Charles crossed the Alps, and proceeded to Rome. Leo offered to stand a trial, in order to show how groundless were the charges by which his discontented subjects excused their revolt; but the bishops refused to take cognizance of any such accusations against the head of the Church, and when the pope had simply denied the charges on oath, his adversaries were condemned to death as calumniators. On Christmas-day, after mass had been celebrated, the pope advancing towards Charles in the presence of all the people, placed upon his head a crown of gold, and hailed him as "Charles Augustus, crowned by God, the great and pacific emperor of the Romans!" Thus the empire of the West was renewed, after an interruption of three hundred and twenty-four years, reckoning from the deposition of Augustulus.

Leo next proposed a marriage between Charlemagne and Irene, hoping that Christendom might thus be united into one empire; but the ambitious sovereign of Constantinople was unwilling to endanger the power she had acquired by so many crimes, and though she did not directly decline the proposal, she wearied the pope and emperor by protracting the discussion of the terms. Charles about the same time received an account of a more glorious and

more successful negotiation. He had sent ambassadors to the renowned Haroun al Raschi'd, Khaliph of Bagdad, to court the friendship of a prince, placed like himself at the head of a mighty empire, and anxious to adorn it by letters, arts, and laws. The survivor of his deputies, Isaac, a Jew well skilled in the oriental languages, returned from the east, bringing with him assurances of Haroun's friendship, and many valuable presents. Among these was an elephant, whose training filled the Franks with astonishment; a clock that struck the hours, adorned with automatic figures, whose motions in that age seemed little less than miraculous; but what merited and received more admiration than all, were the standard of Jerusalem, and the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, which the Khaliph sent as a sign of his resigning to the most powerful monarch who followed the law of Christ, sovereignty over the places consecrated by the memory of his religion.

During his residence at Pavia, Charles made several additions to the laws he had enacted for the regulation of his subjects. But he had no just idea of the duties of a legislator; the voluminous collection of his laws, or capitularies, as they were called, consists chiefly of vague moral instructions, that seem to belong to a treatise on ethics rather than a legal code. On his returning to Italy, the emperor of the West established his residence at Aix la Chapelle, and as he now approached his sixtieth year, he resolved to relax his toils and divide the cares of administration with his children and his ministers. But in the mean time he renewed his negotiations with the Greek empire, and procured the acknowledgment of his title from the empress Irene. She even sent an ambassador to open again the treaty of marriage; but before any arrangements could be concluded, she was deposed by her creature Nicephorus, and forced to bury her ambition in a convent. (A.D 802.) The new Byzantine sovereign was unwilling to disturb the peace between the two empires, and one of his earliest

labours was to renew the treaty with Charlemagne. Soon afterwards the Saxon war, which had raged with some interruption for about thirty-three years, was finally brought to a conclusion; the Saxons, who remained faithful to their national idolatry, were removed from their country to the plains of Gaul or Italy, that long wars had left desert; where they gradually forsook the faith and habits of their ancestors. Many of them, however, made their escape into the unknown fastnesses of Scandinavia, where they diffused that fierce hatred and thirst for vengeance, which, before a generation had passed away, brought the Normans to the shores of France.

The complete subjugation of the Saxons, Huns, and Avars, relieved Charles from the labour of making further conquests. Many of the neighbouring states voluntarily offered him their allegiance; among others the dukes of Venice and Zara, in Dalmatia, of their own accord came to pay him homage (A.D. 806.) But already there were measures taken for the dismemberment of this mighty empire; not by rebellious conspirators, but by the founder himself. Unwarned by the calamities that had befallen the Merovingian line, Charles resolved to divide his dominions among his children, and thus lay the foundation for destructive civil wars. At a *champ de mai* held for the purpose he assigned France, a name which then included Germany and the north of Gaul, to his eldest son Charles; Italy, Bavaria, and his conquests in Pannonia, to Pepin; Aquitaine, Burgundy, Provence, and the Spanish marches, to Louis the youngest. This division was accepted by the three brothers and the general assembly of the people, and was sanctioned by the signature of the pope.

Even in the midst of the glories acquired by Charlemagne, there may be discovered traces of the increasing weakness of the empire, which produced so many calamities in the reign of his successor. Constant wars had diminished the population, and recruits could be obtained with diffi-

culty for the armies that it was necessary to maintain on the frontiers ; the Danes, the pirates of the Mediterranean, and the Moors of Spain, frequently made incursions into the territories of the Franks, and the fleets of the Normans appeared on the coasts. Terror compelled these barbarians to renew their ancient treaties, but they only waited a favourable opportunity to renew their ravages. The death of his sons Charles and Pepin deepened the gloom which began to gather round the declining age of Charlemagne ; having procured the acknowledgment of his son Louis as his successor, he began to practise the austerities of monastic life, and to withdraw himself gradually from public affairs. He was seized with a fever at Aix la Chapelle, as he came out of the bath, which proved mortal on the seventh day. He died on the 28th of January (A.D 814), having reigned forty-seven years over the Franks, forty-three over the Lombards, and fourteen over the empire of the West.

The mighty empire founded by Charlemagne fell to pieces soon after his death ; experience has shown that domination established by conquest must sooner or later be overthrown ; and that nations differing in their language, habits, interests and systems of civilization, can only be held together by force, and necessarily separate when the pressure is removed. Within the memory of man, half of Europe was governed by a single emperor ; Rome, Amsterdam, and Hamburgh were the heads of departments, and Napoleon ruled over dominions as extensive as Charlemagne ; but war destroyed what war had created, and nations resumed their individual existence. The fall of Napoleon was followed by a general peace, because there was an ancient and long-established system on which the nations of Europe could fall back : the overthrow of the Carlovingian dynasty produced a long series of sanguinary wars, because every vestige of ancient civilization had been destroyed during four centuries of confusion, and the various tribes of conquerors and conquered had to create the institutions which

were to give form and consistency to their existence as separate nations.

But though the political unity of western Europe, which Charlemagne had laboured to re-establish, perished with him, the intellectual union he introduced not only survived him, but with little interruption has been ever since acquiring fresh strength. His merits as a conqueror may be forgotten, but his patronage of letters in an age of darkness and ignorance deservedly procured for him the title of a benefactor of the human race. Under the last of the Merovingian kings, literature not only declined but seemed to have become utterly extinct. The clergy, devoted to the sports of the field or the profession of arms, wholly neglected their proper pursuits, especially when the abbeys were introduced into the military system, and the abbots regarded as feudal lords. The revenues of monasteries were devoted to feeding hounds, and supporting soldiers. The superior clergy forgot even the forms of the church, and the laity remained without instruction. The first labour of Charles was the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline. In peace and in war he issued capitularies for regulating the affairs of the church. He perpetually corresponded with the bishops and abbots, inquiring into the state of their dioceses, their monasteries, and the morals of the people. To the bishops he recommended the study of the Holy Scriptures; to the clergy, strict discipline; to the monks, a faithful discharge of their vows; to the magistrates, an impartial administration of justice.

The moral improvement effected by these means was greater in reality than in appearance; it was followed by an intellectual reform, whose commencement was in like manner seemingly trifling, but in truth of the highest value. Charlemagne resolved to restore as far as possible the purity of ancient manuscripts, and to fix the orthography of language, knowing that the uncertainty and obscurity which had crept into all records, sacred and profane, was a pri-

mary cause of the prevailing ignorance. The English Alcuin, who was so beloved by Charlemagne that the courtiers called him "the Emperor's delight," was the guide in devising these wise plans and the ablest instrument in effecting their execution. Under his superintendence correct copies of the Holy Scriptures were prepared, the text carefully revised by the aid of the best scholars from Greece and Syria, and hence most of the best manuscripts belong to this epoch. Schools were opened in the churches, and monasteries, which formed a posterity of illustrious men, whose labours and knowledge perpetuated the march of improvement.

On the other hand, it must be confessed, that there was much in the private character of Charlemagne to weaken the effect of his beneficial measures. His palace was indeed the abode of learning, but it was also the abode of licentiousness and debauchery. The forms of ascetic devotion were strangely mingled with the most shocking profligacy of manners, and the effects of the imperial example spread through every rank of society. These faults were more conspicuous towards the close of the emperor's reign; they therefore only partially dimmed his glory, but they prepared an inheritance of woe for his successor.

CHAPTER XIX.

Overthrow of the Carlovingian Dynasty. Foundation of the Germanic empire.

(From A.D. 814 to A.D. 987.)

THE new sovereign of the western world, whom the Italians called Louis the Pious, and the French Louis the Debonnaire, was thirty-six years old at the time of his father's

death. By his wife Hermengarde, a German princess, he had three sons, Lothaire, Pepin, and Louis. He had been crowned king of Aquitaine when only three years old, and from the time of his boyhood, Charlemagne had sought by every means to procure him the love of his future subjects. But though Louis had on several occasions displayed valour and prudence, his superstitious devotion to rigid ecclesiastical observances induced many of the courtiers to declare that he was more fitted for a convent than a throne, and this he regarded not as a censure, but as a compliment. He inherited the empire, at the very moment when the splendour of victory was no longer sufficient to conceal its inherent weakness. The excesses of the military leaders were become intolerable to the oppressed peasantry, the class of free labourers had entirely disappeared in France, those who were not reduced to servitude by force, voluntarily surrendered their freedom to purchase the protection of a powerful lord. Louis provoked the resentment of these feudal tyrants, by sending deputies into all the provinces of the empire, to offer redress and restitution to the oppressed ; a few were restored to their properties, and became thenceforth firm partisans of the empire.

Bernard, whom his grandfather Charlemagne had created king of Italy, came to pay homage to Louis, both as his uncle and liege lord, and was confirmed in his power. Soon after, the emperor gave to his eldest son Lothaire the government of Bavaria, and to Pepin that of Aquitaine, thus erecting subordinate kingdoms on the most exposed frontiers of his empire. The first sign of weakness exhibited by Louis was submission to a papal usurpation : on the death of Leo III., the clergy and Roman people, without waiting for the imperial mandate, elected Stephen IV. to the vacant pontificate ; and the new pope, aware of the insult offered to the sovereign power, came personally to excuse himself to Louis. He little knew the weakness of the emperor ; Louis, so far from contesting Stephen's

election, besought him to sanction his own title to the empire, and was crowned by the pope at Rheims. The court of Rome did not fail to profit by such favourable circumstances, and it was thenceforth maintained that monarchs owed their crown not to the force of arms, or the will of the people, but the choice of the head of the Church.

Hermengarde was anxious that her third son should enjoy the title of king, and persuaded her husband to make a new division of his dominions. Louis, overwhelmed by the weight of empire, gladly embraced the opportunity of sharing the imperial authority and its attendant cares with his eldest son Lothaire, who in turn resigned his kingdom of Bavaria to his brother Louis. This arrangement gave just displeasure to Bernard, the king of Italy: though he had recognized his uncle's authority, he regarded himself as the next in succession, because he was the son of an elder brother, and because after the death of Louis he would be the eldest successor of Charlemagne. A great number of the Frank bishops and nobles embraced the cause of Bernard, preparations were made on both sides for war, when the crafty Hermengarde offered her mediation, and persuaded Bernard to submit himself to his uncle. The king of Italy dismissed his followers, and accompanied by some of his principal partisans appeared before the emperor and entreated pardon. Every one expected that he would be honourably dismissed, but Louis, influenced by his wife, caused Bernard and his friends to be prosecuted as traitors, and condemned them to death. The sentence was subsequently changed into deprivation of sight, but Hermengarde took care that this barbarous sentence should be so cruelly executed, as to deprive the unfortunate Bernard of life.

Hermengarde did not long survive this crime; on her death Louis became very anxious to embrace a monastic life, but he was dissuaded by the ecclesiastics, who foresaw that another sovereign would be more inclined to resist their

usurpations, and by their advice he chose for his second wife, Judith, the daughter of a Bavarian count. His three sons were indignant at a marriage that threatened to produce new sharers in their inheritance, but three years elapsed without any appearance of such an event. In the meantime, the three natural sons of Charlemagne were forced to receive the clerical tonsure, by which they were for ever prevented from taking a share in temporal affairs.

But Louis could not lull the pangs of conscience; before the general assembly of his subjects, he confessed that he had been deeply criminal in consenting to the murder of Bernard, and in forcing his brothers to enter religious orders, he humbly besought pardon from all present, solicited the aid of their prayers, and undertook a solemn penance. This strange scene rendered Louis contemptible in the eyes of his subjects; some doubted his sincerity, others questioned his motives, but all believed this public confession a needless sacrifice of the royal dignity.

In 823, the empress Judith gave birth to a child, afterwards known as Charles the Bald, who was popularly said to be the son of her unworthy favourite, Bernard count of Barcelona. The three former sons of Louis openly declared that the empress had been false to their father's bed, and long refused to acknowledge their new brother. The empire was soon severed by two factions, one adhering to Bernard, Judith and the emperor, and the other supporting the three sons of Hermengarde. An expedition undertaken against Brittany precipitated an explosion which could not long have been delayed; the soldiers were unwilling to enter on a campaign where there was little hope of plunder, and every certainty of harassing toil; their mutinous dispositions were encouraged by the young kings Pepin and Louis, and they marched against the emperor with the professed object of removing his bad advisers. Judith was forced to retire into a convent, Bernard sought

safety in flight, the courtiers that supported him were slain or exiled, and Lothaire assumed the entire authority of the state.

But the jealousy of power awakened the old emperor's energies. The family of Charlemagne owed its elevation to the Germanic tribes; the natives of what we now call France were in reality a vanquished people; during the late reign they had made no effort to throw off the German yoke, but they now hoped to improve their condition by supporting the cause of the young princes. It was an important object with the opponents of the emperor to have the next general assembly of the states held in France, but Louis craftily persuaded Lothaire to consent to having it convoked in Germany, where the misfortunes of the emperor had excited universal sympathy. No sooner had the states met, than Lothaire saw that his party was completely outnumbered; he at once lost all hope, submitted himself to his father's pleasure, and basely abandoned his supporters to the vengeance of the laws. Judith was brought from her convent and Bernard from his exile in triumph. But the violence of the empress, anxious to secure the succession for her own son, soon rekindled the flames of war. The sons of Hermengarde united their forces, and marched against their father: at their approach the soldiers of Louis, indignant at the usurpations of Judith, deserted in a body, and the emperor was forced to resign himself a prisoner to his rebellious children. Lothaire treated him with great severity, and compelled him to read in a public assembly a confession of the crimes and errors of which he had been guilty during his reign.

Lothaire's harshness produced a new revolution, that once more restored Louis, or rather Judith, to supreme power. She took advantage of the crisis to procure an ample inheritance for her son Charles, and despised the remonstrances of the sons of Hermengarde. To add to the confusion of affairs, the Normans appeared on the French

coasts, and plundered the principal sea ports, while the Saracens on the opposite side destroyed the flourishing city of Marseilles. The death of Pepin, the best of the sons of Louis, afforded Judith an opportunity of conciliating Lothaire; she persuaded her husband to overlook the claims of Pepin's son, to restrict Louis to Bavaria, and to divide the remainder of his dominions between Lothaire and Charles. The emperor not only sanctioned this arrangement, but led an army to enforce it against his son the king of Bavaria; but the fatigues of the campaign broke down his feeble constitution, and a dropsical disease put an end to his inglorious reign. (A.D. 840.)

The death of Louis was the signal for war between his children; and the forces of the empire were destroyed by mutual combats, while the Normans, their common foes, were allowed to continue their ravages without interruption. After a long and sanguinary contest, terms of peace were arranged, which being based on the natural differences of nation and language, promised to be permanent. All Germany as far as the Rhine was given to Louis, whose attachment to the Teutonic language and customs had procured him the surname of Germanic; Italy and the eastern part of France, from the sea of Provence to the mouths of the Rhine and Scheldt, were assigned to Lothaire*; and Charles obtained the remainder of Gaul and the Spanish marches. Thus Charles the Bald may be considered as the first founder of the French monarchy, properly so called.

It was neither moderation nor a love of peace that induced the Carlovingian princes to put an end to the horrors of war, and listen to the remonstrances of their suffering subjects; it was the universal invasion of the French and German coasts by the northern pirates, called Normans or Danes, who came every year with increased numbers to

* The narrow strip of France thus given to Lothaire was called Lotharingia, subsequently corrupted into Lorraine.

ravage the deserted provinces. The entire of Scandinavia, all the coasts of the Baltic sea, and the banks of the rivers that flow into it, furnished recruits to these plundering bands, who courted danger as a pleasure. It was their boast that they combated in the same expedition the wrath of the elements and the hazards of war. They waited for no excuse, they sought no pretext for attacking a country; they acted as if they were the enemies of all mankind. So early as the year 841, Oscar, one of these piratical chiefs, or Norman dukes, ascended the Seine as far as Rouen, pillaged and burned that beautiful city, and for fourteen days ravaged the surrounding country without interruption. Nantes, Bourdeaux, Saintes, and other maritime cities, were similarly destroyed, in subsequent expeditions; the inhabitants attempted no defence, but abandoning their walls crowded into the churches, where they were massacred without resistance. The military spirit of the Franks seemed to have been wholly extinguished, and even self-defence was not a motive sufficiently powerful to overcome their cowardice.

Charles was engaged in a desultory war with his nephew Pepin, and did not therefore pay much attention to the Normans, but a new and more daring invasion covered him and his soldiers with endless disgrace. Ragner, a Norman duke, entered the Seine with a hundred barks, and ravaged the country on both sides of the river, though Charles was posted with a powerful army on the right bank of the river. The invaders advanced towards Paris, which though it had ceased to be the metropolis under the Carolingian kings, was still one of the most important cities of the empire. Finding its walls undefended, they entered the gates and laid waste the city with fire and sword, they hanged several of their prisoners in sight of the royal camp, as an insult to the degraded sovereign, but nothing would stimulate Charles to exertion; he not only permitted the Normans to retire with all their booty, but bribed them with seven thousand pounds of silver to hasten their departure.

Hastings, another Norman duke, is traditionally said to have been the son of a French peasant, who sought refuge in the wilds of the North from the cruel oppressions of the feudal lords. He identified himself with these pagans, adopted their manners, embraced their religion, and so distinguished himself by skill and bravery, that he was soon chosen one of their chiefs. His thirst of vengeance animated their cupidity; his enmity was chiefly directed against the nobility and clergy; wherever he passed some humble cottages were spared, but every castle, every church, every monastery fell a prey to the flames. The devastations of the Normans, and still more the tyranny of the nobles, who had reduced the peasants to the most degrading state of slavery, led to the abandonment of agriculture. It was impossible to expect that the husbandman should toil, when the monarchy and the church refused him protection, when the law gave him no redress, and when the fruits of his labour were wrested from him, by some petty tyrant at home, or piratical hordes from abroad. A famine desolated the entire kingdom, and the pressure of absolute misery compelled Charles and Pepin to conclude a truce. Still they could not be brought to unite against the barbarians, who devastated the empire of Charlemagne both on the north and south; the Normans devastated not only France but Germany, adding the conquest of Aix la Chapelle to that of Paris, and the very suburbs of Rome were plundered and burned by the Saracens.

Among the most prominent causes of the universal weakness that preceded and produced the downfall of the western empire, was the enormous increase of the sacerdotal power. The importance of the clerical order was enhanced, not merely by the vast increase of their wealth and numbers, but also by the rapid decline of the other ranks of the state. Foreign wars, civil commotions, unbridled licentiousness, and the belief that a monastic life would atone for former crimes, led to the extinction of many noble

houses, and there were no means by which those of inferior rank could be raised in their place. When an opulent family became extinct, some rich family in the neighbourhood generally usurped a portion of its possessions, and thus rendered the feudal domains little principalities ; but generally much the larger portion was bequeathed by the mistaken piety of the late possessor to the Church ; and thus the corporation of the clergy, which could not alienate any of its possessions, and whose domains were daily enlarged by fresh bequests, became possessed of the greater part of the property of the kingdom. Ecclesiastical benefices were consequently worthy objects of aristocratic ambition, and were regarded as in some degree the inheritance of noble families. There was rarely any inquiry into the qualifications of a candidate for an abbey or a bishopric, and hence the dignitaries of the Church rivalled the military nobles in ferocity, brutality and debauchery. Like them they carried arms, and frequently fought in the field, but they generally preferred the contests of the cabinet and the council, where their superior skill in diplomatic art assured them a victory over their ignorant rivals. The vassals on the church lands, which probably in this age included the half of France, were rarely trained to the use of arms ; they relied for protection on the sacred character of their masters, on the skill of the clergy in negotiations, and on the miraculous power of relics and sanctuaries. Among the proofs that may be cited of the decay of military spirit was the gradual abandonment of judicial combats, and the substitution of the equally absurd appeal to the judgement of God, by the ordeals of fire and boiling water.

It would be tedious to repeat the history of the desultory wars between the sons of Charlemagne, for they ended in leaving the parties in possession of their respective dominions ; but it is of importance to observe the difference between the states ruled by the three monarchs. France had fallen completely into the hands of the clergy ;

the nobility was rapidly decaying, the army possessed neither courage nor military skill, the rural population was all but annihilated, and the royal authority was universally despised. Lothaire had not granted such dangerous powers to the prelates in Italy and Lorraine, but his dominions were parcelled out into large principalities, the government of which was all but hereditary; the Italian dukes maintained military bands in their fortresses, and protected in some degree the trade of the towns. Louis the German ruled over a more martial people; there were more free peasants in his dominions than in those of his brethren, and he could rely on the services of an armed democracy.

A severe fever, in the beginning of the year 855, warned the emperor Lothaire of approaching dissolution, and according to the pernicious custom of his family, he prepared to divide his dominions among his children. Italy with the title of emperor was assigned to Louis II., Lothaire received the kingdom of Lorraine, and Charles, the youngest, obtained the countries between the Rhone and the Alps, which were thenceforth called the kingdom of Provence. Charles the Bald, on his part, gave his two sons the titles of kings of Neustria and Aquitain; while Louis the Germanic created his three sons kings of Bavaria, Saxony, and Suabia. Thus the Carlovingian family was enabled to show an abundance of kings among its members at the same moment, though it possessed scarcely one that merited the title.

The Church, by tacit consent, had been invested with the censorship of morals, and thus an opportunity was afforded to the pontiffs of interfering in the domestic arrangements of royal families, and regulating the succession to crowns, of which they were not slow in availing themselves. Such an opportunity was afforded, by the quarrels between Lothaire II. and his wife Theutberga, which produced very important political consequences.

Theutberga, the wife of Lothaire, was the daughter of

Boson, count of Burgundy ; she had been accused by her husband of incest with her brother Hubert, abbot of the convent of St. Maurice, and had proved her innocence by the ordeal of boiling water. Lothaire had in the mean time taken to his bed the beautiful Valdrade, to whom he asserted that he had been previously contracted, but had been forced to marry Theutberga, in order to procure the powerful aid of Boson in quelling a civil war. Lothaire, however, was forced by the clergy to take back his first wife ; but in order to escape from the harshness with which she was treated, Theutberga confessed herself guilty of the incest with which she had been charged, and was solemnly divorced from her husband by a general council of the bishops, held at Aix la Chapelle. She was confined in a convent, from which she contrived to make her escape, and seeking the suspicious protection of her brother Hubert, she retracted her confession, and asserted her innocence. Pope Nicholas, one of the most enterprising and haughty pontiffs that ever filled the chair of St. Peter, declared himself the protector of Theutberga, and insisted on Lothaire's receiving her back ; nor was he diverted from his purpose by the supplications of Theutberga herself, who was willing to endure the infamy of divorce rather than return to a husband by whom she was detested. For fifteen years, this scandalous dispute engaged the attention of all Christendom ; at length Adrian II. succeeded Nicholas, and appeared willing to reconcile Lothaire to the Church. The unfortunate king went to Rome, and swore on the holy sacrament that he would never again form a wish to renew his intercourse with Valdrade. Remorse for this perjury brought him to the grave within two months. He died at Placentia. (A.D. 869.)

Charles, king of Provence, died of epilepsy six years before his brother. Charles the Bald would at once have seized his nephew's dominions had he not been embarrassed by the rebellion of his own children. This monarch, con-

stantly engaged in war with his nearest relations, could never be persuaded to attack the Normans and Saracens, his real enemies; he bribed the pirates to withdraw, whenever they threatened his security, and though he thus obtained a temporary relief, he only stimulated them to fresh invasions. Few monarchs were more unfortunate in their children: his two eldest sons rebelled against him, they were subdued after a tedious struggle—Charles, the younger, soon after died of an accidental wound, received in a mock combat; Louis the Stammerer survived, with a disordered intellect, and a shattered constitution. His two remaining sons were sent into a monastery, where one died of grief, and the other being taken prisoner after having made his escape, was deprived of sight by his barbarous father. The death of Lothaire awakened the avarice of Charles the Bald; he sent directions to the clergy to offer up prayers for the repose of his nephew's soul, and levied an army to take possession of his estates. Louis II., the most able of the Carolingian princes, was prevented from securing his inheritance, by the troubled state of Italy; the Saracens in the south of the peninsula, and the schismatic Greeks and Lombards in the central districts, employed all his forces, and compelled him to abandon Lorraine. Louis the German was also involved in war, and Charles the Bald was thus permitted to pursue his schemes of aggrandizement without opposition. The death of Louis II. (A.D. 875.) not only secured Charles in the possession of Lorraine, but gave him the means of obtaining the kingdom of Italy, and he received the imperial crown from the pope John VIII.

Louis the German prepared to contest the usurpations of Charles, but before he could take any effective measures, he was seized by a mortal disease, and died, leaving his three sons to defend their dominions against their uncle. The three brothers united their forces, and a desultory war ensued, in which the Germans established their superiority over the French. Charles fled before his nephew Carlo-

man; the fatigues of a rapid journey brought on a fever, and he terminated his dishonourable career at Mount Cenis. (A.D. 877.) Carloman did not long survive his uncle; a pestilential disease burst forth in his army, to which he fell a victim in the following year. His brothers, Charles the Fat, and Louis the Saxon, shared between them the kingdoms of Bavaria that he had inherited and Italy that he had conquered; the death of Louis the Saxon, once more changed this arrangement, and gave to Charles the Fat the imperial crown, and the sovereignty of Italy, Germany and Lorraine.

Louis the Stammerer succeeded his father Charles the Bald in the kingdom of France. His disordered constitution, weak intellect, and feeble character rendered him unfit to contend against the evils that beset the monarchy, though it may fairly be doubted whether any skill or energy would have been sufficient to retrieve the state from the weakness and disorder in which it had been left by the late sovereign. The Normans had quartered themselves in all the provinces, and the prelates alone possessed any authority in the government. The very year of his death Charles had given the final blow to the royal power by declaring the governments of the principalities hereditary. By this edict the king lost all control over the army, the administration of justice, and the territorial revenues of the provinces: by the same edict the citizens and peasants lost their last security for freedom; they were given up without protection to the feudal lords, who parcelled out France into as many independent governments as there had been formerly subordinate administrations. But while the inferior offices of state were thus rendered hereditary, there seemed some danger that the ambitious nobles would endeavour to render the crown elective. Many of them took up arms against their sovereign, and but for the interference of archbishop Huremar would probably have excluded the feeble Louis from the throne. Indeed they did not recognize his title

until he had confirmed all the usurped privileges of the clergy and nobles, granted a full amnesty to all who had taken up arms, and styled himself "king by the grace of God, and the election of the people." It would be impossible to give an adequate description of the wars between the ambitious nobles who had divided the empire between them, during the troubled reign of the unfortunate Louis. The presence of the pope added to the confusion, for being forced by the partisans of the German branch of the Carolingians to seek refuge in France, he proceeded to regulate the affairs of the kingdom at his pleasure, and found the French so degraded by clerical usurpations, that they were more ready to obey than he was to command. Encouraged by this success, pope John summoned all the Carolingian princes to a council, where their respective claims might finally be arranged under his superintendence, but the death of Louis II. (A.D. 879.) prevented the meeting.

Louis III. and Carloman jointly succeeded, but at the very commencement of their reign, Boson count of Provence wrested from them a great portion of their inheritance, and founded the independent kingdom of Provence or Arles. The imperial title assumed by Charles the Fat seemed to give him some new title to the supreme power, and his authority was nominally acknowledged by the members of the Carolingian family. But Charles was little better than an idiot, and utterly incapable of ruling so extensive an empire, even if it had been tranquil and united, instead of being rent in sunder by ten thousand jarring interests. The deaths of Louis III. and Carloman in the very prime of youth hastened the ruin of the Carolingian family; the only surviving member of the French branch was Charles, subsequently called the Simple, a mere infant, the legitimacy of whose birth was disputed.

The ancient empire of Charlemagne was once more apparently re-united under Charles the Fat. But feebleness prevailed in every part of it; the Germanic states at once

hated and despised the French, the Italians felt that they had interests separate from both, and when an enemy appeared, no one part would give assistance to the other. The corpulent sovereign of the empire was incapable of any thought unconnected with the pleasures of the table. Instead of openly resisting the Normans, he invited them to a conference, and while they were off their guard, treacherously massacred the principal chiefs. This abominable crime only exasperated the pirates, who soon recruited their numbers, and Charles allowed them to ravage his dominions without making any further attempts at resistance. Finally, they besieged Paris, which was gallantly defended by its inhabitants for more than a year ; at length the emperor was compelled by very shame to make some effort for its relief, but instead of attacking the Normans, he purchased their retreat by an enormous bribe. At length, the nobles of the empire resolved to force their sovereign to choose a successor, and an assembly was convoked for the purpose at Tribur on the Rhine. The reigning sovereign was now the only legitimate descendant of Charlemagne, if we except Charles the Simple, whose legitimacy was disputed ; the Franks were therefore compelled to choose from the illegitimate branches, and they selected Arnolph duke of Carinthia. No sooner had his appointment been ratified, than the court of Charles was deserted ; even the greater part of his servants abandoned the aged emperor, and he had absolutely to beg the means of support from his nephew. Charles did not long survive his degradation : he died (A.D. 888.) almost unnoticed, and with him ended the western empire.

The election of Arnolph was disregarded in most of the provinces ; and a host of ambitious nobles prepared to carve out kingdoms for themselves. The most distinguished of these was count Eudes, who had acted a conspicuous part in repelling the Normans from Paris. A second victory over these pirates, at the moment that rival chiefs

were preparing to dispute his elevation, secured him the crown of France, or rather of the country between the Meuse and the Loire. But even in these limited territories, the Normans disputed with him the possession of Neustria and the whole of the sea coast. This division of the empire produced one beneficial result, it revived the martial spirit of the people; the dukes and counts who aimed at sovereignty felt the necessity of establishing a claim to popular support by exhibiting their valour, and every petty prince felt it necessary to maintain an army in good order, as a defence against the ambition of his neighbours. Hence it happened that though the Normans were not driven from France, they had to fight more battles to maintain themselves in the country during the ten years' reign of Eudes, than during the entire time that Charles the Bald occupied the throne. But though Eudes was an able sovereign, he was not able to control the factious nobles, who remembered that though now their master, he was once their equal; they raised up Charles the Simple as his rival, declaring him the lawful heir of Louis the Stammerer; and France was once more the prey of desultory warfare. It was terminated by the death of Eudes, who, passing over the claims of his brother Robert, bequeathed the crown to his rival.

Charles the Simple had little more than the empty title of king of France; not only did four other princes take a royal title from provinces that had been possessed by his ancestors, Lorraine, Transjuran Burgundy, Provence and Brittany, but the powerful feudatories of Neustria and Aquitaine governed their states with actual independence, and gave no other mark of allegiance than dating their edicts from the years of his reign. The most dangerous of these were the brother of the late king Eudes, who was styled duke of France, and his son Hugh count of Paris. Only one important event marked this reign, the establishment of the Normans in that part of Neustria which received from them the name of Normandy, an establishment that

changed the most formidable enemies of France into French citizens.

The most dreaded of the Norman chiefs was Rollo, who by his successive victories in Neustria, Aquitain, Lorraine and England was become the terror of the western empire, the idol of the Northern warriors, and the chosen leader of the united corsair bands. In the year 911 he sailed up the Seine to besiege Paris, but his forbearance was purchased by a large sum of money. He continued however to ravage the provinces, until at length Charles offered to resign to him a considerable province, if he would spare the rest of the kingdom, acknowledge himself a vassal of the crown of France, and embrace Christianity. Rollo without much hesitation assented to these conditions. Charles, overjoyed at the prospect of peace, not only resigned to him the province of Normandy, but gave him his daughter, and obliged the neighbouring counts of Brittany to supply the Normans with provisions until they could cultivate their new possessions. He appears at the same time to have ceded to Rollo all the pretensions of the crown to that part of Brittany which no longer recognized the authority of the kings of France.

Rollo presented himself on the borders of his newly acquired province to his new sovereign. The terms of peace were confirmed by mutual oaths. Rollo swore allegiance to Charles, who in return presented his daughter and invested him with the duchy of Normandy. The French prelates, who assumed the regulation of ceremonials, and had introduced the degrading prostrations of the Orientals into the forms of European homage, informed Rollo that after receiving a gift of so much value, he should on his bended knees kiss the feet of the king. "Never," replied the haughty barbarian, "will I bend my knees before another mortal, never will I kiss the feet of man." As the prelates however were urgent, he ordered one of his soldiers to perform the ceremony in his stead. The soldier

advancing rudely seized the foot of Charles, and by a sudden jerk threw the monarch on the ground. The Normans who witnessed the transaction applauded their comrade's insolence, while the French nobles deemed it prudent to conceal their indignation. The ceremony was continued as if nothing had happened, the several Norman lords took the usual oaths of allegiance, after which the king returned to Laon, which he had chosen for his capital, as Paris formed part of the fief of Duke Robert.

The establishment of the Normans in Neustria is one of the most important political events of the tenth century. It at once put an end to the system of piracy and plunder that had for more than one hundred years devastated Germany, Gaul and England; it permitted the peasants to resume the cultivation of their fields, the priests to restore their ruined churches, and the citizens to rebuild their walls. Sheer necessity almost compelled Rollo to consent cheerfully to the great change; repeated pillage had so exhausted the maritime portions of Europe, that the plunder to be acquired no longer repaid the hazards of the expedition; and the feudal lords, as they began to acquire independence, gradually fortified their castles, and nurtured the military spirit of their followers. Thus the booty at once became less valuable and its acquisition more difficult; and this change was felt not only by the Normans but the Saracens, whose predatory expeditions were gradually discontinued. Under Rollo the feudal system, which had been slowly forming, received its full development; immediately after his baptism he divided the lands of Neustria among his principal officers, to each of whom he gave the title of count, and these counts subdivided their lands among the soldiers. The Normans displayed the same ardour in cultivating their new estates as they had formerly shown in devastating them. Strangers were invited from every country to colonize the waste lands, and the most vigorous laws were enacted for the protection of person and property. Rob-

beries were so efficiently checked, that Rollo as a bravado hung up a golden bracelet in a forest near the Seine, which remained untouched for three years. To prevent the future incursions of his countrymen, the duke fortified the mouths of the rivers, restored the walls of the cities, and kept his subjects in constant military training.

But while Normandy was thus improving, Germany and France were a prey to the accumulated evils of foreign invasion and intestine commotion. The Sclavonians on the eastern frontiers of the empire had been reduced to obedience by Charlemagne, but about the close of the ninth century a Tartarian horde from northern Asia, calling themselves the Magyars, established themselves in that part of Pannonia which had formerly been occupied by the Huns. It was for this reason that they were called Hungarians, a name still retained by their descendants. The emperor Arnolph, who had caused the German empire to be respected when every other European monarchy seemed falling into ruin, died of palsy (A.D. 899), and Germany became thenceforth a sharer in the calamities of France and Italy. His son Louis IV. was only seven years of age when he ascended the throne; during his long minority the German states were desolated by the revolted Sclavonians and the barbarous Hungarians, who penetrated even into the south of France. Their troops of light cavalry performed such rapid marches, that they baffled all the arrangements of their opponents, and their skill in archery was more than a match for the swords and lances of European soldiers. The feudal lords of Germany took advantage of their sovereign's minority to arrogate to themselves at once the independence which the French nobles had acquired by gradual encroachments, and their success was the more decisive, because their fiefs were more populous, and their soldiers more warlike, than those of France. Louis died (A.D. 911) before the term of his minority had expired; and with him perished the illegitimate branch of

the Carolingians that had succeeded to the German crown when the regular line of succession was broken. Charles the Simple was now the last representative of Charlemagne, but the German nobles would not offer their crown to a monarch whose stupidity had become proverbial; indeed, they would scarcely have again submitted to a single sovereign, had not the rapid progress of the Hungarians in the countries that form the present empire of Austria, showed too strongly the necessity of unity. The dukes assembled, and taking no notice of the claims of Charles, offered the crown to Otho, duke of Saxony, who refused it on account of his great age, but recommended them to choose Conrad, duke of Franconia, who was accordingly elected.

Conrad's reign of seven years was employed in checking the progress of the Hungarians, securing Lorraine where a part of the nobility had resolved to maintain the claims of Charles the Simple, and quelling the revolt of Henry duke of Saxony, who thought Conrad not sufficiently grateful for the recommendation of his father Otho. The fatigues of empire destroyed his constitution, and finding his end approaching, he generously sacrificed private animosities to the good of his country, and recommended his rival Henry to be chosen his successor.

Henry, surnamed the Fowler, proved himself every way worthy of his elevation; he defeated the Slavonians and Hungarians in several engagements, and so humbled the barbarians, that they ventured not to renew their devastations. He died when he was about to be crowned by the pope, emperor of the Romans; and was succeeded by his son Otho, deservedly surnamed the Great, who may be regarded as the founder of the greatness and glory of the German empire.

Whilst Germany was thus wrested from the Carolingian dynasty, Charles the Simple was alienating the affections of his French subjects, by his subserviency to an unworthy favourite. He was at length hurled from the throne by

Hugh Capet, the head of the powerful family of the dukes of Paris, and thrown into prison. (A.D. 923.) His wife and child found refuge in England with Athelstan, king of the Anglo Saxons. Hugh Capet, unwilling to expose himself to envy, gave the crown to Rodolph of Burgundy, but kept all the power of the state in his own hands. It would be impossible to portray the lamentable condition of France during this unhappy period ; the feudal lords paid no obedience to any superior ; they abused their power to the utmost, without any fear of punishment ; and the hapless peasants, reduced to the lowest state of slavery, could find no refuge from oppression but the grave. Charles died in captivity, unhonoured and forgotten (A.D. 929) ; Rodolph was forced to support his nominal title by constant wars with his turbulent vassals ; and at his death (A.D. 936), not only did the crown of France pass away from his family, but a large portion of his hereditary duchy of Burgundy was seized by the ambitious Capets.

After the death of Rodolph, it was to be expected that Hugh Capet, count of Paris, would have assumed the crown of France ; but he felt that his position, as the most powerful noble in France, was more important than that of a sovereign ; and he resolved to bestow the crown on Louis, the exiled son of Charles the Simple, who, on account of his long residence beyond the sea, is commonly called Louis d'Outremer. In this arrangement, he was ably supported by William of the Long-sword, the second duke of Normandy, who was equally convinced of the advantages possessed by a powerful vassal under a feeble monarch. The entire reign of Louis was passed in vain efforts to retrieve the royal authority ; he was especially eager to establish his supremacy over Normandy, after it had been deprived of its valiant duke William Longsword, who had been assassinated by the count of Flanders. But Bernard the Dane, who was entrusted with the guardianship of the young duke Richard, baffled all his efforts, and made Louis

himself a prisoner. After a year's captivity he was liberated, and renewed his struggle with his powerful vassals, displaying more constancy and talent than any recent monarch of France ; but all his exertions were vain, and his career was cut short by a fall from his horse, which proved fatal in the nineteenth year of his age.

Lothaire, the son of Louis, was scarcely more than thirteen years of age when he ascended the throne. His mother, Gedberga, was the daughter of Henry the Fowler ; and as her sister was married to Hugh Capet, she procured for the young monarch the protection of that powerful feudatory. The death of Hugh, sometimes called the Great, left Gedberga sole regent ; and the infancy of Hugh's children for a time relieved France from the turbulent ambition of the Capetian family. Years of comparative tranquillity passed away, and Hugh, count of Paris, the second son of Hugh the Great, began to tread in the steps of his father ; while Lothaire, by a series of errors and follies, showed himself unfit for royalty. He was especially injured by his perfidious attack on his cousin the emperor of Germany, who was the principal support of his crown, and the only counterpoise to the exorbitant power of his vassals. His inglorious reign ended in 986 ; his son and successor Louis died of poison in the following year ; and Charles, duke of Lorraine, was the last representative of the Carlovingian family. But the opportunity which the Capets had so long desired, and which they are accused of having hastened by poison, had now arrived ; Hugh, count of Paris, proclaimed himself king of France ; and his rival Charles, after a faint struggle, became his prisoner.

Thus ended the empire of Charlemagne : Hugh founded a new dynasty, that still possesses the throne of France ; Charles of Lorraine ended his days in prison ; his sons, after having been long detained captive, escaped to Germany, where they lived in obscurity ; and the Carlovingian race finally became extinct. (A.D. 1248.)

But for a long time after the accession of Hugh Capet, the royal authority was merely nominal in France. The domains of the count of Paris were indeed annexed to the crown ; and thus the Capetians had greater territorial possessions, and consequently greater influence than the Carlovingians. But the great feudatories still preserved their independence ; and their tacit assent to Hugh's usurpation was anything rather than a recognition of his authority. In the south of France no notice was taken of Hugh's elevation ; and the inhabitants for many years dated their public acts by the nominal reign of the children of Charles of Lorraine.

The feudal system may be regarded as about this time completely established in Europe : it would be too great an interruption to the historical narrative to describe it here in full detail, and a brief sketch of it would be scarcely intelligible ; we shall therefore devote a separate chapter to its consideration in the Appendix.

CHAPTER XX.

State of the Eastern Empire during the ninth and tenth Centuries.

(From A.D. 862. to A.D. 1028.)

The dethronement of Irene was the last event we recorded in the history of the Byzantine empire. Great as her crimes were, the Greeks had soon cause bitterly to lament her loss ; for her successor, Nicephorus, was one of the worst sovereigns that ever disgraced a throne. His unparalleled avarice led him to levy severe exactions, and at the same time to diminish the pay of the soldiers ; consequently, before he had reigned more than a few months, he was universally detested. The army of the

East, employed in constant war with the Saracens, felt great indignation at the unjust withholding of their pay, and resolved to place Bardanes, their general, on the throne. Bardanes was regarded as the bravest warrior in the empire; he had gained several advantages, and proved both his justice and generosity, by distributing the plunder to his soldiers in proportion to their merits. But he was the slave of superstition; and, before engaging in this expedition, he resolved to consult a recluse, who had the reputation of being a prophet. The credulous Greeks report that this hermit not only foretold the failure of Bardanes, but predicted that two of his officers, Leo the Armenian and Michael the stammerer, would wear the imperial purple. Disspirited by this communication, Bardanes was reluctant to yield to the will of the army; and it was only by the threat of instant death, that he could be induced to head the revolt. The same cause made him tardy in all his operations; so that several of his partisans, wearied by delay, deserted his banners and offered their services to Nicephorus. Still he might have made a powerful stand; but dreading the horrors of a civil war, he secretly stipulated with the emperor for the pardon of all the insurgents, and then sought refuge in a monastery. Nicephorus violated all the conditions of the treaty; he confiscated the property of all who had shared in the revolt, seized on the wealth of Bardanes, and sent a band of hired ruffians to the place of his retreat, who deprived the unfortunate general of sight.

The treaty with the western empire, which had been interrupted by the death of Irene, was very reluctantly concluded by Nicephorus. His haughtiness could only be equalled by his timidity; he regarded Charlemagne as a usurper, but he dreaded the valour of the Franks, and he consented to acknowledge the restoration of the Roman empire. He showed less prudence in his conduct to an equally potent rival, the celebrated Haroun al Raschid, to

whom he sent an insulting letter, demanding the repayment of the money with which Irene had purchased peace from the Khaliph. Haroun, roused by this insult, immediately led an army into the Byzantine territories ; and Nicephorus, passing at once from presumption to despair, submitted to an annual tribute. His avarice soon induced him to repent of this sacrifice, and Haroun punished his perfidy by laying waste the Asiatic provinces, and plundering the islands of Rhodes and Cyprus. The death of the Khaliph (A.D. 809) delivered the Byzantine empire from an enemy whose generosity and greatness of soul rendered him still more formidable than his military talents*.

A less powerful but more dangerous enemy was Crumnus, the king of the Bulgarians. Taking advantage of the low estate to which the Avars had been reduced by the victories of Charlemagne, the Bulgarian monarch completed the ruin of that nation, and enrolled its conquered warriors in his army. Thus strengthened, he attacked the Byzantine empire with success, and carried off a large portion of

* Haroun al Raschid, (or, more properly, Haru'm ar Rashi'd) whose name must be familiar to every reader of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, was the most accomplished of the Khaliphs of Bagdad. Familiar to war from his youth, he brought to the throne heroic valour tempered by humanity and love of his subjects. As devout as he was warlike, during the twenty-three years of his reign he nine times performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and in the other years sent in his place three hundred pilgrims, whom he clothed and supported. He commanded personally in eight great battles, and was victorious in all. He bore inscribed on his helmet, "the pilgrim of Mecca cannot want courage." He loved the company of learned men, and made them his chosen confidants. Never had a Khaliph at his court so many sage counsellors, judges, astronomers, and poets. He was on the whole tolerant to the Christians, and would not permit them to be disturbed in the possession of their churches. The greatest blot on his memory is the destruction of the noble family of the Barmecides, who were the greatest ornaments of the Arabian empire when in the zenith of its glory.

the imperial treasures. Nicephorus, after some unsuccessful efforts, brought over an army from the Asiatic provinces, and invaded Bulgaria, when Crumnus was unprepared for resistance. Some trivial successes so elated the emperor, that he rejected all terms of peace; and, marching recklessly through a difficult country, he plundered and burned the Bulgarian palace. He then pitched his camp in a plain surrounded by mountains, and acted as if all the labours and dangers of the war were at an end. Crumnus took advantage of this neglect to occupy and fortify the passes. So incautious were the Greeks, that the labour was completed before they knew it was commenced; and Nicephorus, at the sight of the barriers, could not avoid exclaiming "We are lost, unless we can find wings to escape." In the midst of a dark night, the Bulgarians set fire to the woods that girdled the imperial army, and then assailed the camp. There was no resistance made, the whole was a scene of carnage and confusion. Nicephorus and all his courtiers, the flower of the youth of Constantinople, the choicest warriors of the empire, perished on this fatal night by the swords of the barbarians or the flames through which they tried to escape. (A.D. 811.) Arms, equipage, treasure, all became the prey of Crumnus. The head of Nicephorus was cut off; and, after being exposed for several days on a pole, the skull was set in silver, and used as a drinking-cup at the feasts given to celebrate the victory.

Stauracius escaped with a mortal wound from the field where his father Nicephorus fell. He was permitted to ascend the throne, but was soon displaced by Michael I, the husband of his sister Procopia, and sent to spend the brief remnant of his days in a monastery. Michael would have been an excellent sovereign if the virtues that render a private individual respectable had been sufficient for a monarch. Pious, beneficent, generous, devoid of envy or ostentation, he retained on the throne the modesty and

affability that he displayed when in an humble station. But wholly devoid of energy, he was the slave of his wife Procopia, whose many virtues were sullied by obstinacy and ambition. Persuaded by a bigotted clergy, he persecuted the Paulicians, a sect which had recently made considerable progress. The Paulicians are accused of having adopted many of the dangerous tenets held by the Manicheans and Gnostics; but they provoked the anger of the clergy more by their opposition to the worship of images and the authority of ecclesiastical tradition, than by any speculative tenets. The Iconoclasts, who were in some degree united with the Paulicians, began to raise disturbances in various parts of the empire, and insults were offered to the images of the saints even in the city of Constantinople.

The ill success of the Bulgarian war greatly increased the popular discontent. Michael had taken the empress with him when he marched to the frontiers; but the soldiers, indignant at being subjected to the command of a woman, compelled him to send her back. Alarmed at the mutinous spirit of his troops, Michael was afraid to hazard any important enterprize, and the campaign ended ineffectually. Leo, the Armenian, who commanded the imperial armies in Asia, obtained about the same time some brilliant advantages over the Saracens; and this led to the institution of unfavourable comparisons between the emperor and his general. A second campaign against the Bulgarians was still more unfortunate; the imperial forces were routed near Adrianople with great slaughter, and the remnant of the army believing that the fault was the emperor's and not their own, resolved to dethrone Michael and elevate Leo in his stead. (A.D. 813.) Michael, unwilling to expose the empire to the calamities of civil war, resigned the crown to his competitor, and retired into a monastery, where he lived thirty-two years forgotten by the world.

Crumnus, after his late victory, finding no enemy in the field, advanced to besiege Constantinople. Leo, unable to contend with him in the field, attempted to destroy him by treachery during a conference. The effort failed, and Crumnus in revenge laid waste the fertile plains of Thrace. But he was unable to make any impression on Constantinople, and he withdrew his forces, resolved to prepare a train of battering engines against the next year. The entire winter was spent in preparations; and as soon as the season permitted, Crumnus appeared once more before the walls. His sudden death, by apoplexy, saved the capital and the empire. After his decease, the Bulgarians were defeated in every battle, and were at length so decisively overthrown, that for seventy-four years they did not venture to renew their wars with the Greeks. But the emperor's hatred of image-worship, and his patronage of the image-breakers, exposed him to the enmity of a large portion of his subjects, and the severe persecution he sanctioned against those who adhered to the opposite doctrines almost justified their hatred. Men and women who did not admit their former reverence for images to be idolatrous were cruelly scourged; priests and monks were put to death by torture. His inflexibility in the administration of the laws was also stained by cruelty; death, loss of limb, and cruel tortures, were inflicted for the most trivial offences, and justice consequently inspired greater horror than crime.

Michael, surnamed the Stammerer, had taken a very active share in the elevation of Leo, and though rewarded with the highest honours of the state, believed that he had not been treated with sufficient gratitude. He had been frequently accused of treason, and had with difficulty justified himself, but these escapes only rendered him more daring; he was at length arrested, brought to trial, and convicted on his own confession. Orders were given for his execution, but as it was Christmas-eve, the empress

besought her husband not to profane the anniversary of the Redeemer's birth by a sanguinary spectacle. Her prayers prevailed; but during the night Leo, tormented by vague presentiments, went to visit the prisoner, and found him tranquilly sleeping in his jailor's bed. He left the dungeon with a gesture of anger, which was perceived by a companion of Michael's, who awoke him, and warned him of the urgency of the danger. Under the pretence of sending for a confessor, Michael before dawn sent word to the other conspirators, that he would denounce them as accomplices unless they effected his deliverance. On the morning of a solemn festival it was usual for a band of priests to chaunt matins in the chapel, and Leo, who piqued himself on his musical talent, took great pleasure in leading the choir. Concealing arms under ecclesiastical habits, a chosen body of the conspirators secretly entered the chapel, and at the instant that the emperor raised the psalm, rushed upon him with drawn swords. Leo for a time defended himself with a huge cross he had wrested from the altar, but as no one offered to assist him, he at length fell under accumulated blows. (A.D. 820.) The patriarch of Constantinople, who had been exiled for his attachment to image-worship, could not avoid exclaiming when he heard the news, "Religion is delivered from a cruel enemy, but the empire has lost a useful prince."

Michael was brought from his dungeon, fettered as he was, and placed upon the throne; some hours elapsed before a smith could be found to remove his chains. Leo's body was treated with shocking indignities; his empress, and her sons who were previously deprived of manhood, were sent into a distant monastery, where they passed the rest of their days in obscurity. The patrons of images gained nothing by this revolution: Michael was ignorant of all religion and careless on the subject, but he thought that the worshippers of images had set a dangerous example of resistance to the imperial authority, and he therefore persecuted them

as severely as Leo had done. He took care, however, to show that his bigotry had no foundation in principle, for he openly ridiculed all the doctrines of Christianity. Thomas, the commander of the Asiatic armies, took advantage of Michael's unpopularity to make an effort for empire, and aided by the Saracens not only made himself master of the provinces beyond the Hellespont, but even crossed the sea and besieged Constantinople. But the strength of the walls defied his efforts, and the king of the Bulgarians, anxious to secure the favour of the emperor, attacked him in his trenches, and routed his armies; he shut himself up with the remnant of his forces in Adrianople, where he was closely besieged. After sustaining the pressure of famine for five months, the garrison at length surrendered Thomas to the emperor. Michael ordered the hands and feet of his enemy to be cut off, and exhibited the mutilated wretch in this state through every street of Constantinople. He was then thrown into a dungeon, and as his wounds were forbidden to be dressed, death soon put an end to his torments. While the attention of Michael was thus engaged the Saracens conquered the beautiful island of Crete, and were so charmed by its natural advantages, that they planted a colony there. (A.D. 824.) The emperor made a vigorous effort to recover so celebrated an island, but his armies were cut to pieces, the general escaping almost alone to bring the news of his defeat. This loss was soon followed by that of Sicily, to which the Saracens were invited by a rebellious prefect. The traitor was slain in the very beginning of the war, but the Mohammedans persevered in their enterprize, and after a long struggle completed this important conquest. (A.D. 828.) For more than two hundred years Sicily remained subject to the Saracens; thence they extended their ravages into Calabria, Apulia, and different parts of Italy, and even threatened the safety of Rome itself.

On the death of Michael II. (A.D. 829.) his son Theo-

philus succeeded, and began his reign by a signal act of unexpected justice. Though he owed his crown to the murder of Leo, he punished with death the assassins of that emperor, and exerted himself to remedy the evils that his father's wicked administrations had introduced into the state. He was especially strict in the execution of justice, but he did not emulate the cruel severities of Leo; the exactions of the officers of state were prevented, and the Byzantines began, after a long interval, to enjoy security of person and property. During the greater part of his reign, Theophilus was engaged in war with the Saracens, and if he obtained any advantages, they were principally owing to the exertions of his able generals, Manuel and Theophobus. Manuel was an Armenian by birth; during the recent revolutions he had been honourably distinguished by the fidelity with which he maintained his allegiance. Theophobus was an extraordinary example of the vicissitudes of fortune; his father, a lineal descendant of the Persian kings, finding himself exposed to danger from the suspicions of the Khaliphs, fled to Constantinople, and supported himself in obscurity, by becoming a hostler at one of the public inns. He died leaving his son, a mere child, in poverty. The Persians, weary of Saracenic tyranny, sent emissaries to search for a representative of their ancient sovereigns, and found the young Theophobus living with his mother near Chalcedon. The circumstance was mentioned to the emperor Leo, who ordered the boy to receive an education worthy of his illustrious descent. Theophilus was the companion of his youthful studies, and when he came to the throne, he raised Theophobus to the highest dignities, and gave him his sister in marriage. Soon after, a body of Persians that had revolted against the Khaliph sought refuge in the Byzantine territories; they were formed into a separate army, and the command given to Theophobus. They became fondly attached to a general whom they regarded as their here-

ditary prince ; numbers of Persians deserted their country to range themselves under the same standard, and in a few years this army contained about thirty thousand men. Full of confidence in their leader, animated by a deadly hostility against the usurpers of their country, they became the terror of the Saracens, and the great bulwark of the Asiatic provinces that still remained to the empire.

But Theophilus, though animated by the best intentions, was sometimes misled by the suggestions of envious courtiers ; he was induced to believe that the faithful Manuel had conspired against his life, and took the horrid resolution of putting out his eyes. Manuel, warned of his danger, fled to the court of the Khaliph, Al Motassem, by whom he was received with the greatest joy. The remote province of Khorassan was at this time in revolt against the Saracens : Manuel offered to reduce it to obedience if entrusted with an army composed of the Greek prisoners. The Khaliph assented, and Manuel soon subdued the insurgents, whose astonishment at being attacked by an unknown enemy greatly facilitated their defeat. When Theophilus received intelligence of these events, he bitterly regretted his ingratitude to a faithful servant, and invited Manuel to return. Love of country prevailed over the splendid dignities offered by the Khaliph ; Manuel escaped to his former master, and was raised to the highest honours of the empire. The indignant Khaliph renewed the war, which continued to rage for several years ; sanguinary battles were fought, many cities and towns destroyed, but no decisive result was produced. Religious disputes engaged the attention of the emperor as much as foreign wars ; like his father, he was violently opposed to image-worship, and persecuted those convicted of the practice. The empress, however, was more than suspected of secretly conniving at it ; and this circumstance, added to the ill success of the war, threw the emperor into a fit of melancholy, which soon brought

on a dangerous disease. While in this state he was persuaded to give orders for the execution of Theophobus; but when he heard that the fatal order had been obeyed, repentance aggravated his illness, and he died in great agony both of mind and body. (A.D. 842.) Though the clerical historians do not pardon his hostility to the veneration of saints and images, they bear reluctant testimony to his civil and military virtues, and confess that under him the empire enjoyed a tranquillity and security to which it had long been a stranger.

The Empress Theodora had been appointed guardian of her young son, the emperor Michael, on condition of swearing that she would never attempt to restore the worship of images. Scarcely had she assumed the reins of power, than she prepared to violate her oath, and, by the aid of some crafty monks, engaged Manuel to second her designs. This change was not effected without some violence; the severity of the empress drove the Paulicians into rebellion, and they, aided by the Saracens, committed several ravages in the Asiatic provinces. Still the regency of Theodora was beneficial to the empire: her generals indeed were frequently defeated by the Saracens, but the conversion of the Bulgarians to Christianity, chiefly by her means, secured the tranquillity of the empire on the European side. Even had this regency been less beneficial, the crimes of the ensuing reign would have rendered it regretted. From his earliest youth Michael was the slave of intemperance, in which he was encouraged by his maternal uncle Bardas. Before he had quite attained his majority, the young emperor deprived his mother of power, treated her with the grossest contumely, and gave himself up to the most extravagant debauchery. His impiety was as conspicuous as his licentiousness; accompanied by his profligate companions, he parodied the processions and sacred rites of the church, not only in the privacy of his palace, but in the public streets of Constantinople. His

cruel disposition was inflamed by constant intoxication, and in his drunken moments he commanded the most sanguinary executions. The chief care of the empire devolved on the chief chamberlain, Basil, commonly called the Macedonian, who claimed descent from the royal families of Parthia and Macedon. To prepare the way for his elevation, Basil procured the assassination of the infamous Bardas, and was soon after admitted by Michael an associate in the empire. Basil, however, soon found that the emperor viewed him with suspicion, and resolved to avert the consequences. He led a band of assassins into the palace when drunkenness rendered the unfortunate Michael incapable of resistance, and put him to death. (A.D. 867.) The superstitious Greeks say that all the assassins soon perished miserably, which they attribute to divine vengeance, forgetting that Basil, by whom they were employed, enjoyed a prosperous reign.

No sooner had Basil been crowned than he seriously set himself to remedy the disorders that the late reign had introduced into the state. He found the imperial treasury exhausted, but he contrived to replenish his finances by compelling Michael's unworthy favourites to disgorge a portion of their ill-gotten treasures, and by retrenching every superfluous expense. He removed corrupt judges from the bench, and threatened to punish severely those who received bribes under any pretence from the suitors. Property, which had been long insecure, he protected from violence; the merchant was assured in the possession of his gains, the labourer in the fruits of his toil; commerce and agriculture consequently revived, and the empire once more enjoyed peace and prosperity. The discipline of the army was restored, and its renewed vigour proved by a victory over the Saracens, who had come to aid the rebellious Slavonians of Dalmatia. Religion occupied a large share of the emperor's attention; in his reign the eighth general council held under his auspices at Constan-

tinople denounced the Iconoclasts as heretics, and degraded the patriarch Photius, who was suspected of favouring the Paulician heresy. About the same time, the Russians, whose existence was just beginning to be known in Europe, received an archbishop from Constantinople, whose labours spread the influence of Christianity among that barbarous people.

Basil was involved in a war with the Paulicians, whom persecution had excited to revolt. After encountering great personal danger he subdued the insurgents, and then directed his efforts against the Saracens, who had aided them. His campaign was eminently successful; he not only sacked some of their cities in northern Syria, but advanced to the Euphrates, and crossing the river filled northern Mesopotamia with alarm. Returning thence he completed the destruction of the Paulicians, but sullied his victory by an unmanly insult to the body of their gallant leader, Chrysocheir. Nor were Basil's merits as a legislator less conspicuous than those which he displayed as a warrior; he revised the antiquated jurisprudence of Justinian, and took care that its various parts should be formed into an uniform system. An accident in hunting cut short a life so useful to the state. Whilst engaged in pursuit of a stag, the animal turned, struck his horns into the emperor's belt, and hurled him from his saddle. He would have died upon the spot had not a servant released him by cutting the belt. In the confusion of the moment, the emperor ordered the servant to be beheaded for drawing his sword against his prince. A violent fever was the consequence of this fall, which proved mortal in a few days. (A.D. 886.) Before his death the emperor gave his son Leo a volume of instructions that he had prepared for his direction, and recommended him above all things to keep himself free from evil counsellors.

A very moderate acquaintance with literature and science sufficed to procure for Leo VI. in an age of ignorance the

title of "the philosopher." But he was the slave of his unruly passions, and even the clemency he displayed and the peace he laboured to preserve must be attributed to his indolence rather than his virtue. Having had no children by his three first marriages, Leo chose for his fourth empress his concubine Zoe, by whom he already had a son, Constantine, surnamed the Porphyrogennete, because he was born in the apartment of the imperial palace lined with porphyry which was designed for the exclusive use of pregnant empresses. Leo died of dysentery (A.D. 911), supposed to have been produced by the vexatious opposition of the clergy to his uncanonical marriage, and grief for the ill success of his arms against the Saracens.

Alexander, the brother of Leo, had enjoyed the title of emperor during the late reign, but had never shared in the exercise of authority. The minority of his nephew, then only six years' old, threw the whole power of the state into his hands. He used his elevation only as a means of gratifying his depraved appetites, and in a few months his debaucheries brought him to the grave. Constantine then placed himself under the guardianship of his mother, Zoe, whom Alexander had banished; but the empress held the reins with a feeble hand, and was completely at the mercy of her ministers. Romanus Lecapenus, who had been raised by valour from a humble station to the command of the fleets and armies, resolved to destroy the feeble regency. With a victorious navy, he sailed from the mouth of the Danube into the harbour of Constantinople, and was hailed by the citizens as a deliverer. The young emperor was enamoured of Helena, the daughter of Romanus, and on receiving her hand in marriage, he admitted the fortunate soldier to a share of his authority, and gave him the title of Father of the Emperor. But Romanus was not contented with a subordinate station; he assumed the imperial authority, with the titles of Cæsar and Augustus, and raised his three sons successively to the same rank. The

Porphyrogennete was esteemed only the fifth in this Council of Princes, but, devoted to literary pursuits, he seemed insensible of his degradation. Romanus governed the empire for twenty-five years, during the greater part of which he maintained a desultory and not inglorious war against the Saracens, the Bulgarians and the Russians. He was at length dethroned (A.D 914), by his own sons, and confined in a monastery; but they derived little profit from the crime, for they were deposed in a few weeks, and the Porphyrogennete once more became sole emperor.

Literature and the arts had furnished consolation to Constantine while he lived in obscurity with merely the title of emperor, and he did not neglect them when his power was re-established. But these pursuits withdrew his attention from the more important duties of his station. He wrote with some ability on the theory of government, but he abandoned the practice; he displayed great skill in painting, architecture and ship-building; as a musician he composed chaunts for the church, but as an author, painter, and musician he manifested the same mediocrity of genius which appeared in his administration; his conceptions were weak, but he was always accurate in the details. The empress Helena took advantage of her husband's indolence and weakness, to assume the direction of the state: she changed the ministers according to the dictates of her caprice, and during fifteen years of constant alteration never made a worthy choice. Romanus, the son of Constantine, had been seduced into a marriage with a woman of mean birth, who to conceal her origin had taken the name of Theophano. Instigated by this ambitious woman, he is said to have administered poison to his father; the dose did not immediately prove fatal, part of it having been accidentally spilled by a servant, but it so weakened the emperor's constitution, that he fell into a slow decline. His death (A.D 959) was unfeignedly lamented by his

subjects. His misfortunes had endeared him to the Greeks, his feebleness of character was too much in accordance with their own, for them to judge severely of his failings; his learning, his generosity, and his love of justice were virtues too rare not to be valued; even were his merits less, his subjects would have just cause for grief if they were acquainted with the character of his successor.

Romanus II. was entering on his twenty-first year when he ascended the throne. He abandoned himself to depraved pleasure, and the empire to the infamous Theophano. His only innocent or manly pursuit was hunting; the rest of his time was spent in the company of the most wicked and despicable of both sexes. The abilities of two eminent generals, Nicephorus Phocas, and his brother Leo, however, shed a gleam of glory on the reign of Romanus: the former reconquered the island of Crete, the latter gained a brilliant victory over the Saracens in Asia. Having restored Crete to the empire, Nicephorus led a braver army than the Greeks had assembled for centuries against the Emirs of Syria. The Saracens encountered him with superior forces, but were routed with great slaughter, and he captured the important city of Aleppo; but whilst pursuing his victorious career, he received intelligence of the death of Romanus, who is said to have been poisoned by the infamous Theophano. (A.D. 963). The emperor left two sons, Basil and Constantine, of whom the elder was only five years of age; Theophano in their name seized on the administration, but soon found that her tenure of power was very insecure.

Theophano, to secure her power, resolved to unite herself to Nicephorus, who was esteemed a hero by the soldiers, and a saint by the clergy. Some canonical objections were urged against these nuptials; he had been godfather to one of the young princes, and this was supposed to create a spiritual affinity inconsistent with marriage.

Perjury was employed to satisfy these conscientious scruples, and those who were still dissatisfied were forced to silence by the confidence with which the emperor's ostentatious penances had inspired his superstitious subjects. As soon as the affairs of Constantinople were arranged, Nicephorus returned to Asia, where his lieutenant John Zimisces, was carrying on a glorious war against the Saracens. Seconded by his able general, the emperor recovered Cilicia, subdued the greater part of the northern Syria, and blockaded the important city of Antioch, which was captured by his generals in the following year. But his military glory was not regarded by his subjects as a sufficient compensation for the taxes he levied to support the expenses of the war, and for the licence he allowed to his soldiers. The clergy and monks were the first to become his enemies, because he applied a portion of their enormous revenues to the service of the state. They declared loudly against this sacrilegious appropriation of ecclesiastical property, and when Nicephorus was anxious to have those who fell in battle against the Saracens ranked as martyrs, they produced a canon of St. Basil, which, so far from sanctifying warfare, excluded every one who had slain an enemy in battle for three years from the sacrament of the church. An empire must assuredly be hurrying to ruin when cowardice was proclaimed to be a religious duty.

Nicephorus was very anxious to recover Italy, where some of the southern provinces continued nominally subject to the Greek empire; he saw with indignation the usurpations of the popes, especially their assumption of the power of creating emperors of the west. Otho the Great, who had already received this title from pope John XII., was master of the greater part of Italy, and naturally anxious to possess the remainder; he hoped to obtain his desires by peaceful means, and sent ambassadors to ask the hand of the princess Theophano with Apulia, and

Calabria as her dowry. The celebrated Luitprand *, bishop of Cremona, was entrusted with this embassy; the only

* The worthy bishop has left us a curious account of this unfortunate embassy, published in the great collection of the Byzantine historians. Nicephorus imprisoned the unfortunate ambassador, half-poisoned him with the abominations of Constantinopolitan cookery, and shocked his religious prejudices by sundry observances, which the Latin church regarded as mortal sins, and the Greeks as absolutely essential to salvation. Luitprand took a characteristic revenge; he scrawled some barbarous hexameters on the walls of his prison, vituperating Byzantium and all that it contained more bitterly than poetically: he wrote to his master a long epistle descriptive of his sufferings among these "beasts in semi-human shape," and quitted Constantinople with a fierce malediction on a capital so inhospitable and heretical. His portrait of the emperor Nicephorus is any thing but flattering:—"I found him," says the enraged prelate, "a man perfectly monstrous—pigmy-sized, fat-headed, mole-eyed, with a short, broad, coarse and grayish beard; covered like Iopas with long thick hair: an Ethiopian in colour, one whom you would not like to meet at midnight; pot-bellied, with thighs disproportionately long, legs very short, and splay feet, clad in a dirty white woollen dress that stunk from age and filth, wearing Sicyonian shoes, insolent in speech, a fox in cunning, a Ulysses in perjury and lying."

Luitprand then proceeds to give his master an interpretation of a prophecy which it appears was at the time current both in eastern and western Europe. The mystic prediction was "the lion and his cub shall destroy the wild ass," which the Greeks understood to signify that the eastern and western emperors should destroy the Saracens. Luitprand indignantly rejects this interpretation, and assigns good reasons to prove that Nicephorus was not a lion but rather a wild ass, and that the lion and cub were beyond doubt Otho and his son, to whom he promises an easy victory over the ass Nicephorus, as soon as they should turn their arms against the east.

We must not omit the good bishop's farewell to Constantinople: "On the second of October, at ten o'clock, having departed from that city, once most opulent and flourishing, but now starved, perjured, lying, deceitful, fraudulent, rapacious, covetous, avaricious and vain-glorious, after forty-nine days of ass-riding, walking, horse-driving, hungering, thirsting, sighing, groaning, weeping and scolding, I came to Naupactus."

result of which was, to increase the national animosity between the Greeks and Latins. Nicephorus, though he treated Luitprand harshly, feigned consent to the marriage, and promised that he would speedily send the princess to Calabria. Otho sent a magnificent escort to receive her ; but the perfidious Greeks fell upon the unsuspecting Germans, massacred a great number, and sent the rest prisoners to Constantinople. Justly enraged by this treachery, Otho invaded the Greek territories, captured several towns, ravaged the country up to the very gates of Naples, and returned to his own states laden with plunder.

Theophano, who had raised Nicephorus to the throne, was dissatisfied with the small share of power allowed her husband : she had also engaged in a criminal intrigue with John Zimisces, and to gratify at once her ambition and lust, resolved to raise her paramour to the throne. She introduced Zimisces with a band of assassins into the palace at night, and Nicephorus, after enduring many indignities, fell beneath their daggers. (A.D. 969.) With all his faults Nicephorus was the most heroic ruler of the empire since the days of the great Theodosius, and had he been supported by his subjects, he would probably have recovered all the Greek provinces of Asia. The empire of the Saracens was now fast declining, and their name had lost its terrors ; one vigorous struggle might have restored the power of Constantinople, but an avaricious priesthood, a degraded court, and an impatient people, were obstacles not to be overcome by the monarch who laboured for their regeneration.

Zimisces, on ascending the throne, declared that he wished to be regarded only as the colleague of the sons of Romanus, whom he regarded as his children. When he went to be crowned, as was usual, at the cathedral of St. Sophia, he was met at the door by the patriarch, who refused to admit him sullied as he was by homicide and adultery, unless he gave a proof of his penitence by banish-

ing Theophano. Zimisces readily embraced this excuse for delivering himself from an impious woman, whose crimes he could not avoid hating though he had profited by them ; he gave the required promise, and Theophano spent the remainder of her miserable life in a convent. The new emperor more than rivalled the military glory of his predecessor ; all the mussulman powers, enraged by the fall of Antioch, had entered into a league for the recovery of that city, and their combined forces were assembled in Syria. The imperial army, though far inferior in number, completely routed the Saracenic hosts, and this defeat destroyed their alliance. Zimisces in person marched against the Russians, who had become masters of Bulgaria ; and in one brilliant campaign completely destroyed their power, and forced the barbarians to seek refuge in their native forests. Immediately after this glorious achievement, he concluded a treaty with the emperor of the west, and sent the princess Theophano to be united to prince Otho. This princess resembled her mother only in beauty and name ; chaste, pious, and benevolent, she was the greatest ornament of the German court while her husband lived, and the faithful guardian of her children after his decease.

Zimisces, encouraged by former success, resolved to attempt the recovery of Syria and Palestine ; he was descended from an Armenian family, and shared in the reverence of his countrymen for the city of Jerusalem. The best soldiers of the empire were collected for this expedition, and the emperor himself took the command. The campaign was eminently successful ; but before its termination, Zimisces was seized with a dangerous disease which compelled him to return to Constantinople : on his road, he observed some rich lands, which he heard had been recovered from the Saracens by his own valour, and subsequently usurped by the eunuch Basil, who held the office of grand chamberlain ; he could not refrain from

venting his indignation at seeing the rewards of valour usurped by the degraded creatures of the court, and his incautious words were soon reported to the minister. Poison was mingled with the emperor's medicine by one of Basil's creatures; and Zimisce's only reached Constantinople to die. (A.D. 975.) Five months before his death, the astrologers had promised him a long and happy reign, and the failure of the prediction was one of the first circumstances that brought their art into disrepute.

Basil and Constantine, the sons of Romanus II. had been allowed to preserve the imperial title during the reigns of the two usurpers, but their education had been neglected, and they had weakened their constitutions by riot and debauchery. The eunuch Basil hoped to reign in the name of the two princes, and took care to remove all whom he suspected of an inclination to become his rivals. Soldiers trained in the wars of Nicephorus and Zimisce's, were unwilling to submit to such degrading tyranny; the eastern army revolted, and proclaimed Sclerus emperor. The imperial armies sent to subdue the revolted were twice defeated; but in a third engagement, Sclerus, having received a severe wound, fell from his horse. The steed running masterless through the press led the insurgents to believe that their leader was slain; they fell into confusion, and were destroyed almost unresistingly. Sclerus escaped from the field, and sought refuge at the court of the Khaliph. But the young emperor Basil, acquiring wisdom as he grew older, gave fresh alarms to his name sake, the ambitious chamberlain. Ashamed of his indolence and dissipation, Basil II. headed his army in a campaign against the Bulgarians, and was eminently distinguished by his skill and courage. The fame he acquired emboldened him to dismiss his ambitious minister; and the chamberlain, after a vain struggle to recover his influence, died of a broken heart. From this time, Basil changed entirely his habits of life. Wholly occupied by affairs of state,

he renounced pleasures, splendid dresses, and equipages. He became sober, vigilant, industrious, but at the same time haughty, morose and suspicious. His brother Constantine, on the contrary, remained sunk in debauchery, and never bestowed a thought on the affairs of the empire.

The generals who had been most loud in reproaching the indolence of Basil, were most indignant at discovering the change in his character, which threatened to diminish their importance. Bardas Phocas proclaimed himself emperor : Sclerus, who had escaped from Bagdad, again assumed the same title, and thus perhaps for the first time a sovereign's virtues became the cause of a civil war. Phocas, by treachery, got Sclerus into his power, but soon afterwards dropped dead suddenly. Sclerus, restored to liberty, resolved to submit himself to Basil ; he was readily pardoned and permitted to spend the remainder of his life in safe obscurity.

The dangers of civil war being thus averted, Basil was left at liberty to accomplish the great object on which he had for some time fixed all his attention, the complete subjugation of the Bulgarians. The war lasted more than twenty years : it was terminated by the complete subjugation of the Bulgarians, and the annexation of their country as a province to the Byzantine empire. Basil next prepared to recover the island of Sicily, and had already sent a part of his army to secure a landing place, when he was seized with a disease which soon proved mortal (A.D. 1025). Glorious as his reign was, his death was not much lamented by his subjects, who bitterly complained of the heavy taxes levied to support the Bulgarian and Saracenic wars. Unlike Nicephorus, he did not exact contributions from the clergy ; on the contrary, he repealed the law which prohibited bequests to the church, a law which the priests declared to be the cause of all the evils that afflicted the empire.

Constantine, who had enjoyed the title of emperor for

about fifty years, now began for the first time to exercise authority. Utterly incapable of governing, he delegated his power to the companions of his debauchery, whose exactions and cruelties filled the entire empire with confusion. But intemperance shortened his days; as he had no son, he resolved when on his dying bed to choose a successor, and compel him to marry one of his daughters. He selected Romanus Argyus, who was already married to a lady named Helena, whom he passionately loved. Romanus refused the proffered elevation, but was threatened with loss of sight unless he complied. A few hours were allowed for deliberation, and Helena herself prevailed upon Romanus to consent to the second marriage. A new difficulty arose: of the three daughters of Constantine, Eudocia was in a convent; and Theodora, whom the emperor destined to succeed him, obstinately refused to marry a man who had a wife alive. Her sister Zoe was less scrupulous; three days before the death of Constantine she was married to Argyus, and the generous Helena hid her sorrows in a convent (A.D. 1028). Thus ended the Macedonian dynasty, during which the Byzantine empire had recovered from its state of degradation, and almost attained its former pride of place; but it rose only to fall into still lower depths, and finally to fall before the barbarians that overthrew its greatest rival, the Saracenic empire. The downfall of the Khaliphate and the establishment of the Turkish Sultanies, is the event that unites again the politics of the eastern and western world, and it must therefore engage our earnest attention.

CHAPTER XXI.

Decline of the Khaliphate. Foundation of the Turkish power.

(From A.D. 834 to A.D. 1090.)

AL MOTASSEM, the eighth Khaliph of the house of Abbas*, succeeded his brother, the munificent Al Mamun, at a time when the Saracenic empire seemed to have reached the zenith of its splendour. (A.D. 834.) Spain, indeed, had been long separated from the dominions of the Khaliph, and an independent dynasty, that of the Aglabites, had been established in western Africa; but the loss of these distant countries was scarcely felt by monarchs who ruled over the richest portions of Asia. But though the glory of the empire had scarcely been diminished, its real strength was decayed; the descendants of the bold sons of the desert, had lost their native courage and enthusiasm, when mingled with the degraded Syrians, Egyptians, and Persians. A race of freemen had won the empire; it was now tenanted by a herd of slaves. The magnitude of the change was most forcibly shown in the Greek wars: the Saracens had ceased to be conquerors in every field, and so far were they from menacing Constantinople, that they could scarcely defend the borders of Syria. The Khaliph, despairing of ever raising the character of his degenerate subjects, sought for soldiers in the barbarous countries beyond the Caspian, watered by the Oxus and Jaxartes; he trained to his service, Turkish youths, either purchased or made prisoners, and the kindness with which they were treated, induced many of their countrymen to join them as volunteers.

* He is called by many oriental writers, Al Mothamen, "of the eighth," because the number eight occurs so often in his history. He was the eighth Khaliph of the Abassides; was born in the eighth month of the year; reigned eight years, eight months and eight days; left eight sons and eight daughters behind him; fought eight battles; possessed eight thousand slaves; had eight millions of gold dinars, and eight myriads of silver dirhems in the treasury at the time of his death.

The body of guards thus introduced by Motassem soon amounted to fifty thousand Turks; they were the terror of the citizens of Bagdad, and the emperor was soon forced to remove them from the capital. Vathek, Motassem's son and successor, provoked the resentment of his subjects by insisting on the human origin of the Koran, but fear of the Turks prevented any revolt. Motawakkel, the brother of Vathek, succeeded to the throne, principally by the aid of the barbarian mercenaries, but not deriving from him all the favour they expected, they soon put him to death, and placed his son Montaser upon the throne. Grief for his share in the murder of his father, brought Montaser to the grave in a few months, and the Turkish officers, without consulting any of the Saracenic nobles, gave the empire to Al Mostain, the grandson of Motassem. Thus, in less than thirty years after the establishment of the Turkish, they, like the prætorian cohorts at Rome, had become absolute masters of the empire.

The Khaliphs that followed were raised to the throne by the capricious Turks, and deposed whenever they failed to satisfy their avarice. The unfortunate monarchs were subjected to the most brutal indignities, scourged with rods, beaten with iron clubs, exposed naked to a burning sun, and in some instances starved to death. The great body of the empire took no heed of these revolutions, and the dethronement of a Khaliph, excited as little attention in Bagdad as the removal of a petty officer. But in the remote provinces the authority of the shifting pageants that assumed the title of Commander of the Faithful, fell gradually into contempt, and the governors began to assert their independence. New dynasties were established, some of which nominally acknowledged the supremacy of the Khaliph, though they usurped all the attributes of royalty*.

* The chief of these were the Aglabites, who held Western Africa from A.D. 800 to A.D. 941.

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The empire was thus gradually diminished, until at length the title of Khaliph became an empty name.

A new and more formidable enemy to the Abbassides was the sect of the Karmatians, which rose in the beginning of the ninth century, and displayed an inveterate hatred to the orthodox Mohammedans. The Karmatians, like so many other sects that have appeared in the East, professed to believe in the invisible Ima'm, and the chief duty they inculcated was, implicit obedience to their Mahdi, or chief. They averred that all the precepts of the Koran were allegorical, and they changed the ceremonies and form of prayer used by the Moslems. Their sacred book contained among other things, "In the name of the most merciful God. Al Faraj ebn Othman, of the town of Nasrana, saith, that Christ appeared to him in a human form, and said, Thou art the invitation, thou art the demonstration, thou art the camel, thou art the beast, thou art John the son of Zacharias, thou art the Holy Ghost." It is not known why Al Faraj took the name of Karmath, and indeed the early progress of the sect is involved in

The Edriissites, who founded the kingdom of Fez, and ruled from A.D. 829 to A.D. 907.

The Taherites, who reigned in Khorassan from A.D. 813 to A.D. 872.

The Soffarides, so called because their founder was a Soffar, or brazier, who succeeded the Taherites in Khorassan from A.D. 872, to A.D. 902.

The Samanides, who came from beyond the Oxus and succeeded the Soffarides from A.D. 874 to A.D. 909.

The Tolu'nides, who ruled in Egypt from A.D. 868 to A.D. 906, when the Khaliphs recovered that country.

The Ikshidites, who held Egypt from A.D. 936 to A.D. 970.

The Hamadanites, who ruled in Mesopotamia, from A.D. 902 to A.D. 1001.

The Bowides, who ruled over Persia from A.D. 933, to A.D. 1036, and severed that kingdom for ever from the Saracenic empire.

And the Fatimites who claimed descent from Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed. They ruled in western Africa from A.D. 910 to A.D. 969, and in Egypt from the latter date to A.D. 1171.

obscurity, but towards the close of the ninth century, they had increased so much, that they were able to bring large armies into the field, and they committed great depredations in Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia. It deserves to be remarked, that they derived their principal strength from the provinces which at the close of the last century supplied the armies of the Wahabees, the country of the Bedouin Arabs, whose ignorance renders them an easy prey to imposture, and whose restless disposition can only be gratified by the vicissitudes of war.

After many years of incessant warfare, the Karmatians under Abu Tha'her became so formidable as to threaten the security of the empire; he took Cufa, and threatened Bagdad, but finding the capital too well protected, he led his forces against Mecca. (A.D. 929.) The holy city was crowded with pilgrims, when it was stormed by the merciless Karmatians: they spared neither sex nor age, more than thirty thousand Moslems were slaughtered, the sacred well of Zemzem was designedly polluted with blood, all the rich furniture belonging to the temple, all the utensils presented by the Khaliphs, were distributed to the soldiers. They even took away the celebrated black stone of the Caaba, which was not restored for more than twenty years. From this time, the enthusiasm of the Karmatians began to cool, but though they attempted no great enterprise, their predatory bands for more than a century kept the empire in constant alarm.

Al Radhi', the twentieth of the Abasside Khaliphs, was taken from a prison to a throne, without materially improving his condition. (A.D. 934.) Pressed on all sides by the usurpers who had dismembered the Moslem empire, and harassed by the turbulence of the Turkish mercenaries, he created an officer with the title of Emi'r-al-Omra', or Prince of princes, to whom he virtually delegated the entire civil authority of the state. The new minister was entrusted with the sole administration of all military affairs, and had such complete command over the finances, that the Khaliph could

not draw a single *dirham* from the treasury without his permission. For a short time the appointment seemed to produce beneficial effects, by restoring unity to the military operations, but it totally destroyed the power of the Khalifah, and Al Radhi' was the last who was permitted to exercise sovereign power.

The dynasty of the Fatimite Khalifhs, founded in Africa by Obeid-Allah, (A.D. 910,) began to rise as the power of the Abassides declined. Obeid-Allah claimed to be descended from Ismaël, the seventh Ima'm of the house of Ali, and through him from Fatima, the favourite daughter of Mohammed. A numerous sect throughout the Mohammedan dominions believed in the divinity of the seventh Ima'm; they recognized the claim of his pretended descendants to the title of Al Mahdi, or the director, and were eager to extend the power of the Fatimite Khalifhs. Al Moezz, the fourth sovereign of this race, sent an army under the command of a renegade Greek to invade Egypt. The Egyptian nobles, distracted by civil wars, made but a faint resistance, and both that country and Syria were soon added to the empire of the Fatimites. The conquerors laid the foundations of a new city in Egypt, Al Ka'hilah, (the victorious,) or Cairo, (A.D. 969,) which increased so rapidly, that within four years, Al Moezz made it the capital of his dominions. The cognizance of the new dynasty was white, and seems to have been chosen in direct opposition to the black colours that distinguished the partisans of the Abassides.

Wearied by the oppression of the Turks, the Khalifhs of Bagdad sought the protection of the Bowides, or Dilemites, so named from their ancestor, Buiyah, a poor fisherman of Dilhem, who had gained possession of eastern Persia. But the condition of the Abassides was not improved by a change of masters, the Dilemites were even more tyrannical than the Turkish emirs, and their contests for the title of Emi'r-al-Omra', filled the streets of Bagdad with slaughter.

They did not scruple to offer personal violence to their nominal masters: one Khaliph was dragged from his throne and blinded in the presence of the ambassadors from Khorassan; another was forced to witness the profanation of his harem.

Al Kader, the twenty-fifth of the Abassides, placed on the throne by the influence of the Dilemites, (A.D. 991,) abandoned the reins of government to their care, and passed his entire reign in studying the Koran and performing his religious duties. His empire was convulsed by repeated civil wars between the descendants of Buiyah for the office of Emi'r-al-Omra', but the Khaliph took no share in any of the contests; his sanctity and amiable disposition procured him respect from all parties, and during forty-one years that he nominally swayed the sceptre, his was perhaps the only life that was never endangered. But though this period was not marked by any very important incidents in the Khaliphate of Bagdad, (for the wars between the rival candidates for the office of Emi'r-al-Omra' left no trace of their effects,) yet in other parts of the Saracenic world revolutions occurred which almost totally changed the political aspect of the East.

The Fatimite Khaliphs, aided by the partisans of the house of Ali, in various parts of the empire, continually extended their dominions; and it was only by obtaining the aid of the Greeks that the governors of northern Syria, were enabled to retain that province for the Abassides. Al Hakem, the third of the Fatimites who reigned in Egypt, was one of the worst tyrants mentioned in Mohammedan history. He began by cruelly persecuting the Jews and Christians, destroying their synagogues and churches, especially the church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem, and compelling them to wear a distinctive dress which exposed them to perpetual insult. His claims to descent from the prophet were preached by his emissaries throughout Asia; the Khaliph of Bagdad, alarmed at the influence obtained

by his rivals, issued a manifesto denying their illustrious descent, and declaring that they were "the scum of mankind, the scandal of human nature, the pests and nuisances of society, the worst of filth, impostors, utterly unworthy of the noble family from whence they pretend to be derived." But Al Hakem's own conduct was more destructive of his influence than this angry proclamation. Instigated by a crafty impostor, he declared himself an impersonation of the Deity*, and persecuted all, whether Mohammedans, Jews, or Christians, who refused to recognize his blasphemous pretensions. This new sect spread very rapidly not only through Egypt, but through the maritime parts of Syria, and the valleys of Mount Lebanon. The greater part of the Egyptians, however, adhered to their ancient faith, and the Khaliph, like another Nero, punished their obstinacy by setting fire to the city of Misr, or old Cairo, nor did he permit the flames to be extinguished until the fourth part of the city had been destroyed. He was at length assassinated by his sister, whose life he had threatened (A.D. 1020), but his followers refused to credit his death, and even now believe that he will return to earth, and compel the world to acknowledge his divinity. The Druses in northern Syria, are adherents to the creed of Al Hakem; their religious institutions are founded on a charter which they say he bequeathed to his followers before he was removed to Paradise.

The Turks from beyond the Oxus, had conquered Khorassan, and a great portion of the territories now possessed by the Afghans. The Samanian princes, under whom they had risen to greatness, paid a nominal obedience to the Khaliphs of Bagdad. Sabekteki'n, who had been originally a slave to one of the Samanian princes, displayed so much ability, that he was raised to the command of the

* He changed his name from Al Hakem Be-amr-Illah, "the ruler by the word of God," to Al Hakem Be-amr-Eh, "the ruler by his own word."

army, and invested with the government of the district of Ghazni, or Ghizni, a city and province south of the modern Cabul. Sabekteki'n became so popular among his soldiers, that he soon established himself at the head of an independent principality; and, inspired by a desire of propagating the Mohammedan faith, he resolved to invade Hindostan. (A.D. 977.) The Hindu' princes raised an immense army to resist the invaders; but their men were badly equipped, and worse commanded. Sabekteki'n broke their centre by repeated charges of heavy cavalry: and no sooner was this effected, than the whole of the Hindu's gave way, and left the Mohammedans an easy victory. Returning thence in triumph, the conqueror was solicited to aid in subduing a rebellion which had been raised against his former master; his services were rewarded by the government of Khorassan, which he transferred to his son, the celebrated Mahmu'd. During the remainder of his reign, Sabekteki'n was engaged in securing and strengthening the Ghaznevid kingdom; and, at his death (A.D. 997), it ranked among the most powerful principalities of Asia.

Ismael, the second son of Sabekteki'n, succeeded to the throne by his father's will, but he was soon forced to resign his dignity to Mahmu'd, who obtained about the same time the title of Soltan, or Sultan, from the Khaliph of Bagdad. The last of the Samanian princes having been dethroned by his rebellious subjects, Mahmu'd, under pretence of avenging his death, seized on Khorassan, and extended his kingdom as far as the Oxus and the Caspian. But the most important wars of the Ghaznevid hero, were those which he waged against the Hindu's, animated at once by his hatred of idolatry and love of plunder. Twelve times he invaded Hindostan, and on every occasion returned home laden with treasure. The first invasion (A.D. 1001), made him master of the province watered by the five great tributaries of the Indus,

thence called the *Punj-āb*, or country of five waters. The personal jewels of its captured monarch, are said to have been worth eighty thousand pounds.

It would be inconsistent with the limits of this work to trace the career of Mahmu'd in his Indian wars; but his last expedition against the temple of Somna'th, in the province of Gujara't, is an event too important to be omitted. Poetry and fable have been alike employed to adorn the narrative and magnify the value of this conquest, and there are few events in Asiatic history, to which the natives of the East, even at the present day, attach so much interest.

The idol of Somna'th was the most venerated of the twelve Lingas, Phalli, or erect pillars, that had been erected in various parts of India; "the attendants washed it daily with water brought from the Ganges; the revenue of ten thousand villages was assigned for the support of its temple; two thousand Brahmins performed the ceremony of its worship; five hundred dancing women, with three hundred musicians, were ready to perform before it; and three hundred barbers were ready to shave the devotees who sought admittance into the holy place. Such was the popularity of this obscene worship, and such the fanaticism of its followers, that princes dedicated their daughters to the service of the Temple*." The fame of this stronghold of idolatry induced Mahmu'd to attempt its destruction; he departed from Ghizni (A.D. 1025), accompanied by thirty thousand horsemen, with several volunteers, and attended by twenty thousand camels, carrying water and provisions for the supply of the army during its passage through the inhospitable deserts on the route to Gujarat. After a long and painful journey they came before the strongly fortified city of Somna'th: their first attempt at storming was defeated, but a second attack was successful; the Hindu' garrison was cut to pieces, a few only

* Bird's Gujarat, p. 39.

saved themselves in a boat from the fury of the conquerors. The treasures found in the temple exceeded all calculation, —portions of the jewels, with fragments of the idol, were sent as trophies to Bagdad, Mecca and Medina; and a still larger share was reserved to adorn the mosque at Ghizni*. During the intervals of the Indian wars, Mahmud subdued a great part of the modern kingdom of Persia, and the countries on both sides of the Caspian sea. The last sovereign of the house of Buiyah became his prisoner; he was detained in honourable captivity until his death, which was hastened by intemperance. The Turks during this reign passed the Jaxartes in very considerable numbers and established themselves in Transoxiana, where they for a time followed the peaceful occupation of shepherds, and were viewed with favour by the Sultan, though he could not suppress his fears that they might at some future time join with their brethren beyond the river, and disturb the kingdom. Mahmud died of fever, in the sixty-third year of his age. (A.D. 1030.) He was not only the greatest warrior of his day, but an eminent patron of literature. Poetry and history were his favourite pursuits: no sooner was his power established, than he laboured to collect all the historical documents and traditions relating to the ancient glory of Persia, and to ensure their preservation, he sought for a poet who might mould them into form and unite them "with immortal verse." Ferdousi†, sometimes called the Persian

* Some of the romantic historians of this event say, that when Mahmud was about to break the idol with his iron mace, the Brahmins offered him for its ransom a sum equal to ten millions sterling. The Sultan's officers advised him to accept the ransom, but he refused to become "a merchant of idols," and persevered in the work of destruction. His repeated blows showed that the statue was hollow, and that in the interior were contained pearls and rubies to a greater amount than the proffered ransom. The statue being a Linga is a sufficient proof of the falsehood of this anecdote.

† His original name is said to have been Hassan; he was called Ferdousi, because his verses made his hearers enjoy the blessings of paradise, from Ferdous. "paradise."

Homer, was chosen to execute this Herculean task, and was promised a thousand *miscals** for every thousand verses. The poem, called the *Shah Na'meh*, or Book of Kings, was found to contain, when completed, sixty thousand verses, and the royal treasurer paid the poet silver pieces instead of gold. Ferdousi' vainly sought redress, and took vengeance on his patron by penning one of the bitterest satires ever written, and subjoining it to his poem †. He died of vexation in his native city, while a messenger from Mahmud was on the road to repair his wrongs.

Bigotry and avarice were the great defects of Mahmud's character; a few days before his death he viewed the vast heaps of wealth that were piled in his treasury at Ghizni, and burst into tears at the thought of leaving them behind. His strict administration of justice has become proverbial ‡.

* Equal to £674.

† We extract a short specimen of this satire from Mr. Poatt's version:—

“ Behold Mahmud, the man without a mind ;
The heart to meanest avarice consigned !
Who dares religion, faith, and justice brave ;
A king far baser than his basest slave.
Sprung from the dust, he founds a royal race,
But can his mind rise equal with his place ?
Take some young shoot where bitter plants arise,
And place it in the bowers of Paradise :
Let the eternal stream around it roam ;
Steep it with honey, and the honey-comb ;
Deem'st thou thy pains shall change the baleful root ?
No—still 'twill bear its own accursed fruit.”

‡ The following anecdote, illustrative of his love of justice, is extracted from a Persian author.

“ A Turk in Mahmud's service entered a poor man's house, at midnight, and treated him so cruelly that he was forced to abandon his family, and seek refuge at the palace. Mahmud desired him, if the Turk returned, to bring information of it without delay. After three days, the ruffian came again ; the poor man hastened to the palace and told Mahmud, who instantly went to the house, with a few attendants, ordered the lights to be extinguished, and then entering, hewed the Turk in pieces. After this execution he ordered a torch to be

and he is celebrated for a virtue sufficiently rare among the orientals, a strict adherence to his word. His probity, his prudence, and his valour, enabled him to found an extensive empire, but he did not transmit these qualities to his sons, and the Ghaznevid dynasty fell with the same rapidity that it rose.

Mahmu'd at his death (A.D. 1030,) left behind him two sons, Mohammed and Masu'd; they were twins, but the former had come first into the world, and had been always his father's favourite, he was consequently appointed successor to the Ghaznevid crown. Masu'd was by no means disposed to acquiesce in this arrangement, he quitted the Persian Irak, of which he was governor, dethroned Mohammed without encountering any great opposition, and deprived him of sight. The pastoral tribes of Turks that had settled in Transoxiana were joined by numbers of their countrymen, among others by a family or tribe called the Seljukians, long remarkable for their warlike spirit. Their turbulence increased with their strength, they not only began to disregard the Sultan's authority, but made frequent incursions into Khorassa'n. Masu'd, instead of taking measures to check the evil in its commencement, led his army into Hindustan, and during his absence the Seljukians made such rapid progress that a Ghaznevid nobleman justly observed, "though once only ants, they are now become adders."

lighted, and having looked for a moment on the face of the criminal, prostrated himself and loudly returned thanks to God. He then asked for food, and made a hearty meal on the cottager's humble fare. The attendants inquired the cause of such strange conduct, and the Sultan replied, 'When this poor man made his complaint, I believed that no one but one of my own sons would have dared to commit such violence. Resolved to punish the crime, I feared to be diverted from my purpose by the sight of the criminal, and I therefore ordered the lights to be extinguished. Finding that it was not one of my sons, I returned thanks to God; and anxiety having kept me fasting for the last three days, it is no wonder that I should have been gratified with even the humblest repast.' "

In the mean time the relatives of the Dilemites exerted themselves to restore the ancient power of their family in western Persia, and when Masu'd returned from Hindustan, he found his empire on the brink of ruin. He marched first against the Seljukian Turks, who were commanded by Togrul Beg; Masu'd was completely defeated, and the cities of Tu's and Nisabu'r, the first that had ever been possessed by the Seljukians, became the prey of the conquerors. Masu'd renewed his efforts unsuccessfully, until at length having lost the greater part of Khorassan, and the flower of his army, he withdrew to India to assemble fresh troops and repair his losses. On the road, his soldiers mutinied, and deposed their leader. Masu'd was thrown into prison, where he was soon after assassinated, and the blind Mohammed was again placed on the throne. (A.D. 1042.) Modu'd, the son of the murdered Sultan, was not slow in avenging his father's death; he marched against his uncle, encountered and defeated him near the banks of the river Indus, and put to death all who had participated in Masu'd's assassination. The death of his brother, soon after this victory, relieved Modu'd from all dangers of rivalry; but he found that brief as was the time occupied by the civil war, it had afforded opportunity to the Seljukians to extend their conquests, and had encouraged the governors of distant provinces to throw off their allegiance. The young monarch made vigorous preparations to recover his dominions, but while on his march against the Seljukians, he was seized by dysentery, which proved mortal in a few hours. (A.D. 1049.) His death was followed by intestine wars, which completed the ruin of the Ghasnevid kingdom, and from this time, it ceases to occupy a conspicuous place in history.

The distractions occasioned by the misconduct of the Turkish mercenaries in Bagdad, the rivalry between the great ministers of state, and the revolts excited by the intrigues of the Fatimites, induced the Khaliph, Al Ka'yem, to place himself under the protection of Togrul Beg, and to cement the alliance he married the Sultan's daughter.

Togrul, eagerly embraced this opportunity of establishing his power, he marched to Bagdad, (A.D. 1055), and removed the last of the Dilemites from the post of Emîr-al-Omr'a. At first, he treated the Khaliph with great respect, but permitted his soldiers to plunder Bagdad on account of some insult that had been offered them by the citizens. Subsequently, Togrul demanded the Khaliph's daughter in marriage; and when Al Kayem hesitated, he withheld the supplies for the support of the court, and thus starved him into compliance. The marriage contract was signed; but before the nuptials were completed, Togrul died suddenly (A.D. 1163), universally regretted by his subjects.

Togrul's nephew, called, on account of his valour, Alp Arslan, that is, the courageous lion, united the two kingdoms of Khorassan and Irak with their dependencies; he was consequently sole monarch of all the countries between the Oxus and the Tigris, that is, all Ira'n or Persia, in its greatest extent, and he had besides, as Emîr-al-Omr'a, the entire authority of the Khaliphate. The first act of the new sovereign was a happy commencement of his reign; he conferred the office of vizier on Nezam'-al-Molk*, whose political wisdom and integrity continue to be proverbial among eastern nations. Several insurrections in various parts of his extensive dominions engrossed the entire attention of the Sultan in the early part of his reign; but when these were suppressed, he directed his efforts against the Greeks, who had made very rapid progress in the East.

In the preceding chapter, the history of the Byzantine empire was brought down to the accession of Zoe and Romanus Argyrus; a very few words will suffice to trace the progress of its degradation. Zoe formed a criminal intrigue with the brother of the chief of the eunuchs, John, a Paphlygonian, and poisoned her husband. She then raised her paramour, Michael IV. to the throne, (A.D. 1034,) but permitted the entire authority to be usurped by the

* The name signifies 'Ornament of the state.'

eunuch John. Michael was subject from his infancy to fits of epilepsy ; and the debauchery in which he indulged greatly increased the disease. His life was a burthen to himself and all around him ; the crafty John seeing his rapid decline, introduced another Michael, his nephew, into the palace, and compelled the empress to adopt him. Michael V. succeeded to the throne, and the first act of his brief reign was to throw both his benefactors, the eunuch John and the empress Zoe into prison (A.D. 1040). His subjects rose in defence of the princess ; she was liberated, and conjointly with her sister Theodora, placed at the head of the empire. Zoe, at the age of sixty, gave her hand to Constantine X. who assumed the imperial title. He survived her, and on his death-bed attempted to change the order of succession. But the friends of Theodora exerted themselves to secure her rights, and she took possession of her imperial inheritance. After a tranquil reign of nineteen months, she bequeathed the empire to Michael Stratioticus (A.D. 1056), and soon after sunk into the grave.

Michael VI. was a decrepid veteran ; he was soon set aside by his subjects, and Isaac, the head of the illustrious family of the Comneni, was elected emperor by the unanimous consent of all classes. Isaac soon found that his age incapacitated him from active exertion, and offered the empire to his brother John, by whom it was refused ; he then transferred it to Constantine Ducas, a friend of the Comnenian family (A.D. 1059). Constantine XI., after a brief reign, in which he displayed more of the learning of a pedant than the wisdom of a sovereign, left the regency of his dominions and the guardianship of his three sons, who had been all dignified with the imperial title, to his widow Eudocia. The empress regent, alarmed by the progress of the Seljukian Turks, who had subdued Armenia and Georgia, chose Romanus Diogenes to defend herself, her children, and the empire ; and in spite of a promise she had made to her former husband, gave him her hand in marriage.

Romanus III. by his spirit and courage, revived the declining fortunes of the Byzantines, and seemed likely to renew the days of Nicephorus and Zimisces. He marched to besiege Malazkerd, an important fortress in Armenia; and Alp Arslan was roused by the intelligence to hasten to the defence of his hereditary dominions. Before the commencement of the engagement, the Sultan sent to propose terms of peace, but Romanus, contrary to the advice of his wisest counsellors, returned a contumelious reply, which at once broke off the negotiations. He probably relied on his superiority of numbers, and on the superior discipline of his Frank and Norman auxiliaries.

Before commencing the engagement (A.D. 1071), Alp Arslan gave permission to any of his soldiers to withdraw, who felt reluctant to encounter danger; he then cast away his bow and arrows, armed himself with a sword and iron mace, tied up his horse's tail, perfumed his body with musk, and putting on a white vest, exclaimed, "If I fall, let this be my winding sheet." Romanus formed his army into a solid phalanx, and tried to break through the Turkish centre, which gradually retired before him; the squadrons of the barbarian cavalry in the mean time poured clouds of arrows on the flanks of the Grecian column; and the emperor, finding his troops exhausted by a desultory combat, gave orders to sound a retreat. No sooner had the backward movement begun, than Andronicus, a prince who had long been jealous of Romanus, broke his line either through cowardice or treachery, and the Turkish cavalry rushing through the gap, threw the whole army into confusion. The rout was complete—Romanus fell into the hands of the enemy, and the greater part of his followers were either captured or slain.

Alp Arslan treated Romanus with kindness, and dismissed him on condition of his paying a large ransom. But when the emperor again entered his states, he found that Eudocia had been deposed during his absence, and Michael

Ducas placed on his father's throne, under the guardianship of his uncle John. He honourably exerted himself to pay the stipulated ransom, and sent a portion of it to the Sultan, stating the circumstances that prevented his transmitting the entire. Alp Arslan would have espoused the cause of his late prisoner, but before his arrangements could be completed, Romanus had fallen into the hands of his enemies, by whom he was imprisoned and put to death. Michael Ducas soon proved himself unworthy of the throne; he was deposed by Nicephorus Botoniates, and Nicephorus in his turn was forced to give way to Alexius Comnenus, third son of John Comnenus, who had refused the empire, (A.D. 1081,) a prince of great political wisdom, whose prudence under very trying circumstances more than atoned for his deficiency in valour.

After having subdued Romanus, Alp Arslan resolved to attempt the conquest of Turkesta'n, and led an army of two hundred thousand men to the banks of the Oxus. A bridge of pontoons was laid across the river, and it took the army twenty days to pass over. (A.D. 1071.) Alp Arslan was indignant at the delay, and was still more enraged at the defence of a little castle, whose governor, Yussef*, a brave Karasmian, made a vigorous resistance. When the place was at length taken, the Sultan loaded the governor with reproaches, to which Yussef, who expected to be praised for his valour, made an insolent reply. Alp Arslan ordered him to be bound hand and foot, that he might slay him with his own hand; Yussef seeing the Sultan preparing his bow and arrows, drew a knife that he had concealed in his boot, and rushing upon him, mortally wounded him in the side, before he could be cut down by the guards. Alp Arslan did not survive many hours; by his own directions he was buried at Maru', a city of Khorassan, and the following inscription graven on his tomb. "All you who

* The same as Joseph.

have beheld the glory of Alp Arslan raised to the very heavens, see him now at Maru' buried beneath the dust."

Malek Sha'h, though not the eldest son, succeeded his father Alp Arslan, principally by the exertions of the vizier Nezam-al-Molk. He was recognized as lawful heir by the army and by the Khaliph, but his uncles prepared to dispute the throne, and the early part of this reign was distracted by civil wars. No sooner was his throne established than he resolved to execute his father's projects, and sending a portion of his army to invade Syria, he led the remainder to the banks of the Oxus, or as it is called in the east, the Jihu'n*. The campaign was equally brief and glorious: the Kha'n of the Turkmans was defeated and made prisoner, and the entire of Transoxiana, or Mawar-an-nahar †, was added to the Seljukian dominions. The Sultan's lieutenants in Syria were similarly successful, having subdued Aleppo, and carried their arms in the opposite direction to the very confines of Egypt. The Khaliph Al Moktadi, anxious to secure the Sultan's favour, sought and obtained his daughter in marriage. The nuptials were celebrated at Bagdad with extraordinary rejoicings, which we are assured surpassed any thing that had ever been seen before.

Seeing his extensive empire tranquil, Malek Sha'h undertook the pilgrimage to Mecca, and expended incredible

* In this war Nezam-al-Molk gave the watermen who had ferried the Sultan's forces over the Jihun, instead of money an assignment on the revenues of Antioch. The men, dissatisfied with such payment, applied for redress to Malek Shah, who asked his vizier why he had appointed a fund at such a distance for the payment of these poor people? "It is not," replied the vizier, "to delay the payment, but to make posterity admire the magnitude of your dominion when they shall hear of money received at Antioch for payment of sailors belonging to the Caspian Sea, and of ferry-men who plied on the Jihun." This fancy pleased Malek Shah exceedingly, especially when he saw the vizier at once discount the bills.

† Both names signify the same thing, viz. "the country beyond the river."

sums on his journey. He not only paid the tribute for all the pilgrims who visited the holy shrine during that year, but erected towns and caravansarais in the desert, sunk wells, built cisterns, and purchased provisions for the supply of the poorer travellers. Soon after his return home his attention was engaged by the appearance of a new sect, the most formidable that had yet arisen in any country, the sect of the Assassins, whose name once made monarchs tremble both in Europe and Asia.

The founder of the Assassins was Hassan ebn Sabah, the son of a citizen of Rhe', who had been long suspected of heretical opinions. To avert these suspicions, Hassan was sent to study under the most orthodox teacher of his age. Among his fellow pupils were Nezam-al-Molk, and Omar Kia'm, a celebrated poet. The young men, aware of each other's talents, agreed that whichever of them first rose to an eminent station should provide for the fortune of his companions. Nezam ere long became the vizier of Alp Arslan, and settled a pension on the careless Omar. Hassan lived in obscurity, and became initiated in the secret society of the Ismaelians. When Malek Sha'h ascended the throne, Hassan unexpectedly appeared before Nezam, and claimed the performance of his promise. The vizier introduced him to the Sultan, whose favour he rapidly won, and employed it to ruin his benefactor. Nezam detected his arts, and had Hassan banished. After lurking some time in Persia, he escaped to Egypt, where his connection with the Ismaelians procured him an honourable reception. Here his interference in a disputed succession exposed him to great dangers, which he escaped by means that his followers subsequently described as miraculous. From Egypt he came to Syria, and passing thence into the west of Persia, he secretly promulgated his doctrines until he had secured a large number of partisans. At length he ventured to act openly, and partly by force, and partly by fraud, obtained possession of a mountain fortress in the northern districts

of Persia, called, from its lofty situation, Alamout, or the Eagle's Nest.

The Assassins * were, properly speaking, neither a tribe, nor a sect ; they were a military and religious confraternity, similar to the Knights Templars, or Knights Hospitallers of the middle ages. Implicit obedience to their Grand Master, who was called the Sheikh-al-Jebal, that is, "Lord," or "Old Man of the Mountain," was their most important duty ; at his command emissaries named Fedavi's went in disguise to remove any one who had provoked his wrath ; they watched their opportunity for days, months, and even years, and the moment they found their victim unguarded, plunged the fated dagger in his bosom. Hassan had no regular army, but his devoted Fedavi's were more formidable to the kings and princes of the East than myriads of soldiers. No eminent man could be sure of his life for an instant : the servant who waited at his board, the soldier that fought beside him in battle, the worshipper that knelt beside him in the temple, might be a member of the formidable association commissioned to destroy him. Malek Sha'h having heard of the capture of Alamout sent a threatening letter to Hassan, commanding him to resign the fortress. The Grand Master led the messenger into the front of the castle, where a company of his followers was assembled ; he commanded one of them to stab himself to the heart, and the young man obeyed without the least hesitation ; he made a signal to a sentinel who stood on the top of the castle, the soldier flung himself headlong from the ramparts and was dashed to pieces. Hassan then turning to the ambassador, said, "Go, tell your master what you have seen, and inform him that I have seventy thousand followers similarly devoted to my service." Malek Sha'h, justly

* This name, according to Baron de Sacy is derived from *Hashish*, "hemp," because Hassan used to give his followers an intoxicating liquor made from hemp, and persuade them that during their drunkenness they had shared in the joys of Paradise.

alarmed, resolved not to provoke Hassan, but his vizier, Nezam-al-Molk, was anxious to destroy so dangerous a power. His death was resolved upon; an emissary of Hassan's approached him under the pretence of begging, and stabbed him in the loins. The wound was mortal, the great vizier fell, deservedly lamented throughout the empire*.

Ma'lek Sha'h died in a few weeks after his minister (A.D. 1092); it was generally believed that he was poisoned by one of Hassan's emissaries; and the report, whether true or false, spread every where the terror of an association that had destroyed the greatest monarch and the greatest minister of the East. Nor was this fear unfounded—Hassan, immediately after the Sultan's death, seized on the principal fortresses in northern and western Persia; his grand prior established a branch of the Assassins in the mountains of Syria; and his emissaries were to be found in every city from Egypt to Khorassan.

The Seljukian empire attained its greatest extent in the reign of Ma'lek Sha'h; it included the greater part of Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and the countries east of the Caspian sea. Most of these provinces were governed by princes of his family, from whom he exacted only a

* Nezam-al-Molk had lost the confidence of the Sultan some months before he was assassinated. Just before his death he dictated a letter in Persian verse, to Malek Sha'h, conceived in the following terms. "Supported by your authority, great monarch, I have spent the greater part of my life in banishing injustice from your dominions. I am now going to give an account of my administration, which I carry with me, as a witness of my fidelity to your majesty, to the Sovereign of heaven. The fatal term of my life happens in the ninety-third year of my age, and it is the blow of a knife that puts a period to my days. Nothing remains but to deliver into the hands of my son, a continuation of the long services I have rendered you, by recommending him to God and your majesty." Nezam was a liberal patron of learning, and learned men; his death was lamented by all the poets of the age, some of whose elegies have come down to our times.

nominal allegiance; most of these asserted their independence after his death, and his posterity inherited only the kingdom of Ira'n or Persia, and the tutelage of the Khaliphs of Bagdad. From this period, the power of the Iranian Seljukians gradually declined; their fall was hastened by the creation of officers called Atta-begs, or "fathers of the prince," who were allowed to usurp all the authority of the state. Al Moktafi, the thirty-first Khaliph of the house of Abbas, threw off the Turkish yoke (A.D. 1152) to which the sovereigns of Bagdad had been subjected for nearly three centuries; and soon after, the Seljukian kings of Ira'n were overthrown by their neighbours, the Seljuks of Kharazm, a kingdom east of the Caspian sea. (A.D. 1196.) The Karazmian princes would probably have revived the ancient glory of the Seljukians, but for the invasion of Jenghiz Khan, who deprived the last of their race both of territory and life. (A.D. 1218.) Hulaku' Khan, the grandson of the terrible Jenghiz, destroyed the association of the Assassins, captured Bagdad, and put to a cruel death Al Motasem, the last of the Khaliphs. (A.D. 1258.) The dignity of Khaliph had remained in the house of Abbas more than five centuries. Their rivals, the Fatimi'te Khaliphs of Egypt, had fallen previously, before the celebrated Saladin*, (A.D. 1171) who founded the dynasty of the Ayubite Sultans.

The Byzantines for several centuries continued to call themselves Romans; and most of the eastern nations knew them by no other name. This was the cause, why a powerful branch of the Seljukians, whose dominion was established in provinces wrested from the Greeks, took the title of Sultans of Ru'm, or Rome. Soleyman Sha'h, the first Sultan of this dynasty, was sent into Asia Minor by Ma'lek Sha'h, to extend the conquests which his father

* More properly, Sala'h-ed-di'n, that is, "the righteousness of religion."

Kotolmish had made in that country. In consequence of his success, Ma'lek Sha'h made him prince of the conquered country, (A.D. 1074), and permitted him to assume a qualified independence. Taking advantage of the civil wars, that disputed successions occasioned in the Byzantine empire, Soleyman conquered several provinces, and made Nice the capital of his new kingdom. The governors of Syria had in the mean time thrown off their allegiance both to the Khaliphs of Bagdad and the Seljukian Sultans; they were alarmed by the increasing power of the Sultan of Ru'm, and harassed him by desultory war. Soleyman succeeded in subduing Antioch, and was marching against Aleppo, when he was encountered and slain by the Emi'r of Damascus. (A.D. 1085.) After an interregnum of nine years, Kilij Arslan succeeded his father, and was successful in establishing his authority over the greater part of Asia Minor. His progress, however, was interrupted by the arrival of the Crusaders, who once more brought Europe into collision with Asia.

From what has been already said, it is evident that the Mohammedan countries in the time of the first crusade were in a state of unparalleled disorder. The empire founded by the successors of Mohammed was dissolved, and a new horde of barbarians from the deserts of Tartary occupied the finest of the countries that had been subdued by the Saracens. The representative of the Arabian conquerors was a pageant and a prisoner in the city of Bagdad. The Turks or Turcomans, headed by the sons of Seljuk, had successively conquered Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Asia Minor, and were threatening ruin at the same moment to the Egyptian and Byzantine empires. The rival Khaliphates of Bagdad and Cairo were at the head of rival creeds, the former were Sonnites, the latter Shiites*; they treated each other as heretics, and when they could

* See before, page 187.

no longer employ the sword, they vented their wrath in mutual excommunications. Religious dissensions often flooded the streets of Bagdad with blood, and the cities of Mecca and Medina were alternately occupied by the partisans of the Abassides and the Fatimites. The Turks, who had no religion when they first crossed the Oxus, embraced the Sonnite creed without hesitation, because they found it established in the countries where they first settled, and their successive conquests secured its supremacy.

After the death of Male'k Sha'h, most of the governors of provinces had, as we have already mentioned, asserted their independence; even those who retained their allegiance, as Kerboga the governor of Mosu'l, and the other emirs of Mesopotamia, were only nominal subjects. But no where did anarchy prevail so much as in Syria; Aleppo, Damascus, and Antioch were the capitals of petty principalities, whose rulers were proud in proportion to their weakness. The Egyptian provinces, especially southern Syria, were scarcely in a better condition; the Khaliph of Cairo lived secluded in his palace, and entrusted the whole authority of the state to his ministers. The Egyptians were masters of Tyre, Sidon, and Ascalon, and the principal seaports of Phœnicia and Palestine; they had recently driven the Turks from Jerusalem (A.D. 1397), but no respect was paid to the government, and the cities on the frontiers might be said to be left to themselves.

A remnant of the Christian population was still to be found in Syria and Asia Minor. Some maintained their independence in the mountains of Armenia, Georgia, and Cilicia, not unfrequently taking vengeance on the usurpers of their country by predatory expeditions; the rest were subjected to the grinding tyranny of the Turks, and endured the most dreadful oppression. Under the Saracenic Khaliphs, Christian pilgrims on payment of a small tax had been permitted to visit Jerusalem in safety; but the Turks were far more bigoted than the Arabs, and in

the distracted state of Syria, pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre were exposed to all the evils that rapacity and fanaticism, unrestrained by any laws, could inflict. The tale of their sufferings was spread throughout Europe, and excited every where a thirst for vengeance, and a desire to redeem the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of sanguinary infidels.

We must now resume the history of the West, and examine the political condition of Europe at the commencement of the Holy Wars.

CHAPTER XXII.

Progress of the Papal power.—Conquest of the Normans.—State of Europe at the commencement of the Crusades.

(From A.D. 900 to A.D. 1074.)

ITALY at the commencement of the tenth century, was the most unfortunate country in the world; its southern provinces were incessantly harassed by the Saracens; the rest of the peninsula was a vast field of battle, in which a number of petty tyrants fought for mastery. These divisions were fomented by the popes, whose scandalous lives were a disgrace to religion, and were perpetuated by the turbulent disposition of the Italians, who desired to have always two masters that they might have a pretence for obeying neither, and who were hostile to every power sufficiently established to check outrage. Berengerius II. whose grandfather, the duke of Friuli, had enjoyed the empty title of emperor, was for a time the great favourite of the frivolous Italians; he obtained the title of their king, and was solemnly anointed and crowned. His iron rule was soon felt to be too severe by a people long accustomed

to anarchy ; a universal spirit of revolt was excited, and John XII., who united the title of Roman consul to that of pope, conjured the emperor Otho " for the love of God and his holy Apostles, to come and deliver the Roman church from the claws of the monster that was tearing it to pieces." Otho, believing himself sufficiently strong to master Italy and the pope, crossed the Alps (A. D. 960), deposed Berengerius and his son, and received the crown of Emperor of the West. The pope became alarmed at the power and firmness of the new sovereign ; no sooner was the emperor recalled to Germany by an incursion of the Hungarians, than John entered into a treaty with Adalbert the son of Berengerius, and opened to him the gates of Rome. Otho soon returned to Italy ; a council was held, in which John, having been convicted of the most atrocious crimes, was deposed, and Leo VIII. elected in his stead.

The emperor again returned to Germany, and again John obtaining possession of Rome, Leo was deposed by a council of the very bishops who had raised him to the pontificate, and Rome was once more disgraced by the cruelty and debauchery of a wicked pontiff. Otho soon returned, determined to exact severe vengeance ; but John before his arrival fell a victim to the jealousy of an outraged husband ; and Benedict V. who had been elected his successor by the turbulent Romans, laid down the ensigns of his dignity at the emperor's feet, confessed himself a usurper, and humbly supplicated pardon. Otho took advantage of these favourable circumstances to procure for himself and his successors the right of nominating the sovereign of Italy, of confirming the popes, and of giving investiture to the bishops.

The inconstancy of the Italians, and the wars in Germany, rendered Otho's reign an almost unvarying scene of warfare during thirty years ; but it did not prevent him from exhibiting proofs of political as well as military skill, and establishing at least as strong a claim to the title of Great,

as Charlemagne himself. He committed the same error as the first emperor of the West: confiding in his own power, he did not hesitate to strengthen that of the clergy; to gain the support of the prelates, he conferred on them the titles of dukes, marquisses, and counts, with temporal powers almost royal. He did not foresee that these privileges, though innocuous under a powerful monarch, would be subversive of the imperial authority under a feeble successor.

Otho II. who had been crowned in his infancy, succeeded his father, at the age of eighteen. (A. D. 973.) His youth encouraged some rebellions in Germany, which he had strength enough to quell; but while he was thus engaged, Italy once more fell into confusion, and Rome especially was the scene of fresh revolutions and fresh crimes. Crescentius, the natural son of pope John X., a man richly endowed with courage and eloquence, resolved to restore the Roman republic, and emancipate his country at once from the yoke of the empire and the papacy. He prevailed upon the multitude to second his efforts; pope Benedict VI. was deposed and strangled; and Boniface VII. elected in his stead.

The counts of Tusculum, faithful to the interests of the empire, expelled Boniface, (who fled to Constantinople to implore the aid of the Greeks and Saracens,) and placed one of their own family, Benedict VII. on the throne. Boniface, supported by the forces of the Greek empire, soon returned to Italy, and his allies invaded and subdued the southern coasts. Otho hastened to check these disorders: entering Rome without opposition, he marched in quest of the enemy, but by the cowardice or treachery of his Italian allies, was defeated and made prisoner. His captors did not know the value of their prize; he was permitted to escape, and soon collecting a fresh army, he not only retrieved his former losses, but became master of the cities that had long been possessed by the Saracens. After

his victory he turned his thoughts to vengeance ; the principal leaders of faction at Rome were put to death, and the whole city was filled with mourning *. In the midst of his sanguinary executions, Otho fell a victim to poison (A. D. 983), and left the empire to his son, a boy only twelve years of age.

The Germans and Italians took advantage of the minority of Otho III. to attack the imperial authority. Crescentius threw John XIV., who had succeeded to the papacy on the death of Benedict, into prison. He died in confinement, and was succeeded by John XV., and he was so persecuted by Crescentius that he was forced to fly into Tuscany. An imperial army was sent across the Alps to restrain the factions ; but Otho found that his presence was necessary to restore tranquillity, and as soon as the public peace was re-established in Germany, he appeared in Italy with overwhelming forces. Multiplied vexations had in the mean time brought John XV. to the grave ; the emperor immediately conferred the papacy on a relation of his own, who took the name of Gregory V. But Otho's return to Germany was a signal for a fresh revolt ; Crescentius drove Gregory into exile, and to secure the favour of the Byzantine court, placed in the chair of St. Peter, a Greek bishop, with the title of John XVI. Justly enraged at this insult, the emperor returned, took Rome after a brief siege, de-

* Such was Otho's hatred of the Italians, and such his opinion of their moral degradation, that he made a law forbidding his subjects to believe an Italian on his oath.

It was to prevent the shocking increase of perjury that both the Othos sanctioned judicial combats in cases where the evidence was doubtful. Otho I. caused one of the most important legal questions to be decided by a duel, namely, whether representation ought to proceed in a direct line ; if for example, a grandson, being the representative of the eldest son, ought to succeed in preference to his uncles. The claim of the grandson was established by the victory of his champion, and the law of succession thus determined still continues in force.

prived the intrusive pope of sight, and having got Crescentius into his power by a promise of pardon, put him to death with the most cruel tortures. Gregory being restored, zealously exerted himself to extend the authority of the German emperors, which was in fact the great prop of his own power. He died, after a reign of two years, and was succeeded by Gerbert, who took the title of Sylvester II. Otho did not long survive Gregory; he was poisoned by the widow of Crescentius (A. D. 1001), who thus avenged the treacherous murder of her husband.

Gregory V. relying on the support of Otho, exercised a cruel despotism over the kings of France. The Capets, whose throne was not yet secured by long possession, were forced to have their title confirmed by papal authority, and they were obliged to purchase this favour by implicit submission. Even Hugh the Great, after having deposed the traitor Arnold from the Archbishopric of Rheims, and given the see to the celebrated Gerbert, the most learned man of the age, was forced to see his power set at defiance and Arnold restored. The superstitious Robert, who succeeded Hugh on the throne of France, had married his cousin Bertha; and to obtain the consent of Gregory to a marriage within the prohibited degrees, had not only re-established Arnold, but sent Gerbert out of his dominions. Gerbert obtained from Otho the archbishopric of Ravenna, and by his means secured the favour of the pope, so that Robert's unworthy submissions only precipitated the evil he was anxious to avoid. Gregory solemnly condemned the marriage; Robert refused to part with his wife, and the pope launched against him an anathema of dreadful curses*,

* This anathema was couched in the following terms, "May the king and queen be cursed in the city and country. May their children, their lands, and their flocks be cursed with them. May their bowels burst, like those of the impious Arius. May all the curses pronounced by Moses against impostors fall upon their head. May they be overwhelmed with all the horrors of eternal death. Let no Christian sa-

and placed the kingdom under an interdict.¹ "Divine service was forbidden, the sacraments were refused to the living, and Christian burial to the dead. Robert's subjects were struck with horror; his servants, with two or three exceptions, abandoned him, and those who remained, before his face threw any victuals he had touched to the dogs. The king's courage soon failed, he dismissed Bertha and married Constantia, the daughter of the count of Arles. The rest of his life was spent in the practice of puerile superstitions, and in the midst of tumults occasioned by the ambition and the criminal intrigues of his queen *.

The reign of Sylvester II. was the most tranquil and useful that Rome had experienced for several centuries. Animated by a love of learning, this pope, while yet an unknown youth, had visited the schools established by the Saracens, and learned the elements of the exact sciences, which, in Christendom, had fallen into oblivion. His skill in arithmetic, geometry, music, and the mechanical arts †,

lute them when he meets them. Let no priest say mass before them, or confess them, or give them the communion even at the hour of death, unless they repent. Let them have no other burial than that of asses, in order that they may be an example of disgrace and malediction to the present and all future generations."

* She suspected her husband's favourite minister of instigating Robert to thwart her ambition, and applied to her cousin, Foulke, count of Anjou, to deliver her from this rival. He sent twelve of his followers, who seized the favourite while hunting with the king, and cruelly murdered him in the royal presence. There is reason to believe that it was for this murder that Foulke performed his celebrated penance in Jerusalem, where he caused himself to be scourged before the altar by his own servants, in memory of which he ever after wore in his helmet the branch of green broom (*planta genista*,) that gave to his posterity the surname of Plantagenet.

† William of Malmesbury declares that he constructed an organ, which was played by steam. He is too credulous an historian for us to rely implicitly upon his authority, but the anecdote at all events proves that the use of steam as a motive power, was partially known in the eleventh century.

made him appear a sorcerer to his ignorant cotemporaries, and his extensive acquirements excited the jealous suspicion rather than the emulation of his subjects. He was the first to propose a general confederacy of all Christian nations against the Saracens ; but the age was not yet ripe for this great movement. His exhortations however encouraged many Norman adventurers to engage in war against the Mussulmans, who had settled in the south of Italy. But the death of Sylvester was the signal for new disorders in the papacy ; the counts of Tusculum became masters of the throne of St. Peter, and for several years made it the heritage of their family, or openly sold it to the highest bidder ; the Roman citizens were engaged in perpetual insurrections, the only traces of their ancient freedom, which they were no longer able either to conquer or preserve.

The Saxon line of emperors ended in Otho III. and thenceforth the German monarchy became elective ; whilst in France hereditary monarchy was firmly established under the Capetians ; Henry II. of Bavaria was elected successor to Otho, and thus the two systems of monarchy were exhibited in contrast, in the two great divisions of the empire of Charlemagne. The new emperor found the elective crown a crown of thorns ; he had not long worn it when fatigued by the constant wars in Germany, he wished to resign it and seek tranquillity in a monastery. Having been dissuaded by the princes, he exerted himself so vigorously that he soon restored peace north of the Alps ; but scarcely was this effected, when he was forced to visit Italy, where pope Benedict VIII. had been driven from Rome, and the imperial power menaced by a confederation of the Lombard princes. (A. D. 1014.) Henry obtained an easy victory ; in the intoxication of his joy he resigned the supremacy over the Holy See that had been conceded to his predecessor, probably ignorant of the value of the important sacrifice he was making.

When the Normans embraced Christianity, they did not

lay aside the spirit of their ancient creed, but united with their new faith the sanguinary principles of the worship of Odin. They still regarded war as a religious duty; they still cherished their love for perilous enterprises, and regarded the propagation of the faith as the chief object of their lives. Pilgrimages, represented by the Church as a full atonement for the most odious crimes, were naturally multiplied in an age equally sanguinary and superstitious; but the Normans were the foremost in these devotional travels, because they equally gratified their love of adventure and their fanaticism. They embarked for Palestine in the ports of Italy, and were supported in their travels partly by alms and partly by pillage. But the sea-ports in the south of Italy were exposed to the incessant attacks of the Greeks and Saracens, so that the pious adventurers frequently commenced or terminated their pilgrimages by a battle. Thus, forty Norman chevaliers, on their return from Jerusalem, (A. D. 1002,) found Salerno besieged by the Saracens, and offered their services to the Lombard prince of that city. Being supplied with arms they headed a sally, and by their desperate valour completely routed the besiegers. Richly rewarded they returned home, celebrating every where the wealth and laurels they had obtained, and the ease with which they were acquired. Numbers of their countrymen were thus incited to seek riches and glory in the south; a few went to serve against the Saracens in Spain, but far the greater number sought employment in Italy. Benedict VIII. encouraged these adventurers; they fought with their usual valour against the Greeks and Mussulmans, and the country of Aversa was at once the reward of their valour and the foundation of wider dominion.

The Tusculan family after the death of pope Benedict VIII. (A. D. 1024,) had the influence to place two of their house, a layman, John XIX., and a mere boy, Benedict IX. successively on the papal throne. Conrad, who suc-

ceeded Henry II. in the empire, was too much engaged in quelling factions to interfere with the Holy See; but his son and successor, Henry III. was forced to visit Italy, by the increasing scandals of the Church. (A. D. 1046.) Four rival popes, three of whom were remarkable only for their profligacy, squandered the revenues of the papacy, and filled Italy with their contentions. Henry III. deposed them all, and substituted in their place his chancellor, who took the title of Clement II. At the same time, the emperor profited by the gratitude of the new pope, and the general disgust produced by the recent schism, to assume to himself the future nomination of the sovereign pontiffs.

The despotism of sovereigns, the tyranny of feudal lords, the ambition of the popes and of the prelates, the general ignorance of every class at this period, threatened universal anarchy. Private wars were maintained by petty barons, as well as by their superior lords; bishops mustered their vassals to assail their temporal rivals; princes of the blood headed bands of robbers on the high roads, and the subjection of the clergy to the imperial power deprived the lower ranks of society of their last chance of protection. The bishops were at length induced to interfere; at the council of Limoges, (A. D. 1031,) they instituted what they called "The Truce of God," by which private wars, robberies, and exactions were forbidden, under pain of excommunication from Wednesday evening to Monday morning.

Slight as was this palliative, it was only partially obeyed. The church set the example of breaking its own laws; for on the death of Clement II. (A. D. 1034,) the Romans, notwithstanding their recent oath to the emperor, placed Benedict IX. once more on the throne of St. Peter. Henry III., however, soon dethroned the usurper and gave the pontificate to Damasus II., and on his sudden death, to Bruno, bishop of Toul, who took the name of Leo IX.

The new pope was a weak, scrupulous, and superstitious prelate; unable to bear the weight of the power he had

received, or to comprehend the mission with which he was entrusted by the emperor. On his journey to take possession of his See, he stopped at the monastery of Cluny, in Burgundy, where he was received by the prior, the son of a Tuscan carpenter. This monastic, thus humbly born, was the celebrated Hildebrand, who was destined at no distant day to shake Christendom to its very centre, and acquire, in the course of a single life, more power for the Holy See, than it had gained during the preceding ten centuries. It must be confessed, that the evils which had arisen from the subjection of the church to the state, fully justified the efforts made to restore ecclesiastical independence. From the moment that prelacies and abbacies were placed at the disposal of monarchs, or rather their turbulent vassals, piety and learning had been wholly banished from the church, and the clergy rivalled the feudal barons in turbulence, oppression, and the gross vices that usually attend the union of ignorance and power. The great object of Hildebrand's exertions was to secure to the church, the appointment of its own rulers and ministers, to render it a counterpoise at once to despotism and feudalism; he might almost have been regarded as a benefactor of mankind, had he rested content with his first success, and not tried to change ecclesiastical independence into papal despotism. His efforts were in some degree aided by the emperor himself, who shocked at the usurpations of the nobles, who either seized bishoprics for members of their family, or openly sold them, had enacted very severe laws against simony*, and thus afforded courage to those who protested against the interference of the laity in the affairs of the Church. Hildebrand received the pope with a stern aspect; he reproached him in bitter terms for having broken

* The sale of ecclesiastical charges,—so called from Simon the Magician, who wanted to purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost from St. Peter.

the canons of religion, by consenting to receive spiritual power from a temporal sovereign, for being the pope of the emperor, not the pope of the Church. Leo, who had accepted the emperor's kindness with reluctance, stripped off the marks of his pontifical dignity, promising not to resume them unless he was freely elected by the cardinals at Rome, to conciliate whom, he immediately sent Hildebrand to act as his ambassador. The Roman clergy joyously received the prior, whose boldness had so unexpectedly restored their privileges; Leo was unanimously re-elected, and the emperor took no notice of this open insult to his authority.

Leo having thus quieted all scruples respecting his own election, undertook to purify the church from its Simoniacal abuses; he was zealously seconded by Hildebrand and Damiani, of Ravenna, two monks, of whom the first gained a prominent rank among the popes, and the second among the saints. As the ecclesiastical state of France was especially scandalous, he ordered that a general council should be held at Rheims (A. D. 1049,) for the reformation of abuses. The Simoniacal prelates, and the princes by whom they had been instituted, were filled with alarm; they applied to their sovereign Henry I., whose reign was all but nominal, and he at the desire of vassals, really his masters, supplicated Leo to forego his intentions. The pope paid no regard to this remonstrance, probably because he knew that it came rather from the guilty ecclesiastics, than the monarch; he proceeded to Rheims at the appointed time, escorted by vast crowds that came from every part of France to pay him homage; and in spite of the royal prohibition, twenty prelates, and fifty abbots assembled at his summons. The council strictly investigated the delinquencies of the French clergy; one archbishop, three bishops, and an abbot were deposed, and sentence of excommunication passed on the princes and nobles who had violated the canons of the Church by simoniacal practices, incestuous marriages, or gross acts of profligacy.

But while France exhibited such implicit obedience to the popes, Italy showed little reverence either for their spiritual or temporal authority. The Normans were continually enlarging their possessions in the southern part of the peninsula. In the reign of the emperor Conrad (A. D. 1036,) the sons of Tancred led an army of adventurers to support the prince of Salerno against the Greeks; twelve brothers successively passed from Normandy into southern Italy, where they by turns inspired horror and terror by their rapacity, cruelty and perfidy; and admiration by their chivalrous valour. The emperor Henry III. gave them a legal establishment in Italy (A. D. 1042), by granting them the investiture of all their conquests in Apulia. But the native Italians soon found the Normans more troublesome neighbours than the Greeks; and Leo, emboldened by his alliance with the emperor of Germany and the king of France, commanded them to quit the country. His mandate was of course disobeyed; he obtained the aid of a German army to enforce obedience, but was defeated near Cevitella, and taken prisoner. Humphrey and Robert Guiscard, the leaders of the Normans, treated Leo with all possible attention, but they detained him in captivity not only until he had given them absolution for the past, but also sanctioned their future enterprizes, by giving Robert Guiscard investiture of Apulia which he had already subdued, and of Calabria and Sicily, which he intended to conquer. This arrangement was highly advantageous to both parties; the counts of Apulia were raised to the rank of legitimate princes, and as they agreed to hold their conquests as fiefs of the Holy See, the pope acquired fresh power by every acquisition they made.

By this treaty the popes virtually proclaimed war against the Byzantine empire; but the schism between the Greek and Roman churches was now so great that the heads of each regarded their rivals as infidels. The real cause of hostility was the claim made by the pope to supremacy

over all the Christian churches, which the patriarchs of Constantinople refused to admit; but the ostensible ground of difference was the procession of the Holy Ghost, the use of unleavened bread in the Sacrament, and some trifling points of ecclesiastical discipline. On his death-bed, Leo was meditating an attack on the schismatic Greeks; but though he did not live to complete his design, his successors for the next century were engaged with the patriarchs of Constantinople in a mutual war of anathemas and excommunications. Bigotry had ere this, claimed its victims in Europe; several persons accused of heresy had been put to death in France and Germany, and more than one popular insurrection raised by turbulent priests to destroy the Jews.

Hildebrand had now reached such a height of power, that he was permitted by the emperor to nominate the successor of Leo. His choice fell on a German bishop, a member of the imperial family, who took the title of Victor II. To this pontiff, Henry III., who was soon after seized with a mortal disease, bequeathed the care of his infant son, whom he had procured to be elected his successor. The premature death of Henry III., altered the character of the reformation he had commenced in the church. The purity of his morals, his zeal for religion, his activity and his courage, had enabled him to preserve a mastery over the clergy; his eloquence gave him a commanding influence in the diets and councils. By withdrawing the prelates from the yoke of the feudal lords, and strictly prohibiting Simoniacal practices, he rendered the clergy more moral and more respected, and as he believed more submissive to the imperial authority. But his son and successor Henry IV., found this new power of the clergy directed against himself, and felt sensibly that the prelates were only rendered more formidable adversaries by the regularity of their election and the strictness of their lives.

Victor II. did not long enjoy the papacy ; Hildebrand again had to nominate a pope, and he chose the brother of the marquis of Tuscany, who took the title of Stephen IX. Stephen immediately began to arrange a plan for raising his brother to the empire instead of the child who nominally ruled, but before he had made any effective progress, he was cut short by death. Just before his dissolution, he assembled the clergy and people of Rome, and forbade them to elect his successor until Hildebrand, then absent on an embassy in Germany, had returned. But the counts of Tusculum, long accustomed to regard the papacy as their inheritance, rushed at night with a body of armed men into the Vatican church, and installed one of their faction, with the title of Benedict X. To add to the indecency of this proceeding, Benedict was so utterly ignorant that he could not read a single page.

Hildebrand had reached Florence on his return, when the cardinals and bishops flying from Rome, brought him the news of this usurpation. Surprised, but undismayed, he assembled the bishops and cardinals, and procured the election of the bishop of Florence to the papacy, with the title of Nicholas II. The emperor's sanction of this choice was easily obtained ; an army, commanded by the marquis of Tuscany, was sent to expel the Tusculan faction ; but the Roman people hastily sought reconciliation with Hildebrand. Nicholas entered the city in triumph, and his rival was sent to repent of his ambition in a monastery. Nicholas, or rather Hildebrand, who directed the pope as he pleased, commenced his reign by summoning a general council, in which among other matters it was decreed, that for the future the pope should be elected only by the college of cardinals ; but to avoid giving offence to the emperor, a clause was added, saving to him all due honour and respect. This clause however was couched in such ambiguous terms, that it was doubtful whether it gave the emperor authority over the pope, or the pope authority over

the emperor. When Hildebrand came subsequently to interpret it, he left no doubt of the latter meaning being the one intended. He next entered into a treaty with the Normans, confirming to them the grants of provinces still unconquered, over which neither they nor the pope had the slightest claim to authority, and receiving in turn homage and tribute. Like so many of his predecessors, Nicholas enjoyed his elevation only for a brief period, and his death (A.D. 1060,) was the signal for fresh disorders.

Hildebrand persuaded the cardinals and bishops to elect Alexander II. without waiting for the emperor's sanction. The empress dowager Agnes, who acted as regent during her son's minority, held a council at Basil, and appointed Honorius II. to the papacy. War ensued, but while the struggle was yet undecided, Hunno, archbishop of Cologne, contrived to obtain possession of the young emperor's person, and the administration of the government. The empress Agnes was forced to kneel for pardon to pope Alexander, after which she was shut up in a convent, and Honorius, despised and forgotten, died in obscurity. The pope commenced his reign by strictly enforcing the celibacy of the clergy, deposing several prelates who had married contrary to the canon. But the most important event in Alexander's reign, was his sanction of the Norman conquest of England, which for the first time brought this country completely under the control of the Church.

The Anglo-Saxons attained the summit of their glory in the reign of Alfred; after his death (A.D. 901) the power of the realm gradually decayed, until at length the Danes obtained complete possession of England, under Canute. (A.D. 1017.) Two of Canute's sons successively reigned in England; but on the death of the second, the crown was restored to the Saxon line, in the person of Edward the Confessor, principally through the influence of a powerful noble, Godwin, earl of Kent. (A.D. 1041.) Edward had resided in Normandy during the period of the Danish supre-

macy, and had contracted many intimacies with the natives of that country, as well as an affection for their manners. Compelled to marry the daughter of the powerful Godwin, he treated her with marked indifference, and it is said, abstained from her bed ; an absurdity, which in that age of superstition, had no small share in procuring him the titles of Saint and Confessor. His hatred of Godwin induced him to choose as his successor William duke of Normandy, who notwithstanding the illegitimacy of his birth, had succeeded his father Robert in that duchy, and had displayed great wisdom and valour in defending his inheritance. Harold, the son of earl Godwin, was the favourite of the English people, and his popularity seemed to ensure him the crown whenever a vacancy should offer. But Harold was so imprudent as to place himself in William's power, and was restored to liberty only on condition of swearing a solemn oath on the relics of the saints, that he would use his utmost endeavours to facilitate the Norman duke's succession to the British throne. Scarcely however had he returned to England, when he entered into close alliance with Morcar, the most powerful nobleman north of the Humber, and by his unwearied exertions to secure popular favour, showed that he did not consider himself bound by an extorted oath. On the death of Edward, Harold assumed the crown with the general approbation of the English people. Duke William loudly protested against Harold's perjury ; he declared his determination to support his own claim to the throne of England by arms ; the adventurous Normans eagerly urged him to the contest ; the emperor of Germany permitted his subjects to volunteer their aid ; and the regency that governed France during the minority of Philip I. indirectly sanctioned his levies. Above all, he secured the patronage of the pope, who was gratified by William's appeal to his tribunal, and was besides anxious to destroy the independence of the Saxon clergy, who had long refused submission to the exorbitant claims of the papacy. Alex-

ander excommunicated Harold and all his adherents; and to encourage the duke of Normandy, he sent him a formal bull *, conferring on him the kingdom of England, a consecrated banner, and a diamond ring, said to contain one of St. Peter's hairs. William soon assembled an army of sixty thousand picked men, so many having offered themselves that he was in some measure forced to make a selection.

The first enemy that Harold had to encounter, was his own brother Tosti, who joined with an army of Norwegians in the invasion of Northumberland. Harold immediately marched to meet the enemy, and gained a decisive victory, in which Tosti and the chiefs of the Norwegians were slain. Scarcely had the Saxons rested after the battle, when they learned that William had landed on the coast of Sussex at the head of the flower of the chivalry of Europe. Contrary to the advice of his brothers and principal officers, Harold resolved to hazard an immediate battle, and led his forces towards Hastings, where William was encamped. On the 15th of October, 1066, the armies engaged; success was long doubtful; but at length Harold and his brave brothers fell, the Saxons were irretrievably broken, and the Norman Conqueror secured in the possession of England. The vanquished were deprived of property and freedom, the broad lands of England were distributed among the hungry adventurers who accompanied William, and their former possessors sunk into slavery, with the exception of a few daring spirits, who sought employment in distant lands †. French, the language of the conquerors, was established as the language both of fashion and the government; and for

* The papal instruments and edicts are so called from the leaden seal (*bulia*) usually appended to them.

† Several of the Saxons wandered as far as Constantinople, and entered into the service of the Greek emperors. Their descriptions of Norman cruelty, tyranny and perfidy, had probably some share in rendering the crusaders unpopular among the Greeks.

more than three centuries, the name and tongue of Englishmen were badges of slavery.

In southern Italy, the Normans were similarly successful, in laying the foundations of a new monarchy. The pope encouraged Roger, count of Capua, who had gained several advantages over the Greeks and Saracens, to undertake the entire conquest of Sicily, conferring on him the singular title of General of the Apostolic See, and entrusting him with the sacred banner of the church. After thirty years of almost incessant combat, the Normans wrested the island from the peaceful rule of the Saracens, and subjected it to the feudal yoke, which almost wholly destroyed its agriculture and its commerce.

Alexander II. was as zealous as his predecessors in checking simoniacal practices; but he surpassed them in daring, by citing the emperor Henry IV. to appear in person before his tribunal and answer a charge of illegally using the property of the church. His death rendered the citation of no effect (A.D. 1073); for his successor naturally was unwilling to commence his reign by insulting the majesty of the empire.

Hildebrand, after having wielded the papal power so long in the name of others, at length ascended the throne himself, and took the title of Gregory VII. The triple struggle between the despotism of sovereigns, the tyranny and turbulence of the feudal lords, and the ambition of the priesthood, soon threatened the utter ruin of society; the people, oppressed by all three, were the victims of the mutual rivalry. The emperor confirmed Hildebrand's election, which was certainly informal, and sent him a submissive letter, acknowledging the errors of the former part of his reign, which he attributed to the advice of evil counsellors. But Gregory did not want this stimulus to his pride and boldness; he sent a legate into Spain, to investigate the ecclesiastical abuses of that kingdom, and to claim for the apostolic see supremacy over the

countries recently recovered from the Moors; under the pretence that Spain, before the Saracenic invasion, was part of the patrimony of St. Peter. He claimed and received homage as a temporal prince from the Norman chiefs in the south of Italy; and he threatened the king of France with excommunication for having encouraged the sale of benefices. But his great object was to extend his authority in Germany, and he sent legates to hold a council, with the sanction of the emperor. Henry IV. dreading the ambition of Gregory, and instigated by the German bishops, many of whom were aware that their titles would not bear the scrutiny of a rigid examination, evaded the request. Hildebrand in the mean time assembled a council of the Italian bishops, and enacted that any ecclesiastic who hereafter received investiture from a layman, should be excommunicated, and that all married priests should either dismiss their wives, or be deposed. His next efforts were directed against the Normans, who had usurped some towns belonging to the Holy See in Campania; alarmed by the preparations of this vigorous pontiff, they abandoned their conquests, and offered to give any security for their future fidelity. But the great object of the pope's hostility was the emperor, Henry IV.; he excommunicated his five principal ministers, and repeated his predecessor's daring citation by summoning the emperor to appear before his tribunal. (A.D. 1075.) Henry derided the summons, dismissed the papal legates with contumely, and assembled a council at Worms to depose Gregory. Cincius, a Roman nobleman, had long been the head of the party opposed to Hildebrand, and had exerted all his influence to exclude him from the papacy; having failed in this attempt, he resolved to seize the pope and deliver him up as a prisoner to the emperor. While Gregory was celebrating mass, he was seized by an armed band, wounded in the forehead, stripped of his pontifical robes, and thrown into prison. But the populace flew to arms, and Cincius terrified by their

violence, restored Gregory to liberty, and fled from Rome. Gregory, though bleeding and wounded, returned to the church and finished the service ; he returned home to meditate plans of vengeance on the emperor, whom he more than suspected of having instigated the outrage.

The council of Worms by a unanimous vote deposed Gregory, and the bishops of Lombardy swore on the gospels that they never would recognize him as pope. A monk of Parma had the boldness to announce this sentence to Gregory in the presence of a synod of Italian bishops : he would have been torn to pieces had not the pope, who despised so mean a victim, rescued him from their hands. On the very next morning the enraged pontiff issued a bull of excommunication against Henry, and absolved his subjects from their allegiance. Never did the thunders of the Vatican produce so immediate or decisive an effect ; the German bishops at once deserted Henry, and besought the pardon of Gregory ; the princes and nobles followed their example ; and Henry, passing at once from the extreme of temerity to cowardly despair, threw himself on the mercy of the pope and proceeded to Italy to beg absolution. The Lombard prelates and princes of Lombardy remonstrated with the emperor, but in vain ; when they learned that he had completed his disgraceful submission, they prepared to depose him and elect his son Conrad ; but in less than a fortnight Henry had become ashamed of his yielding to Gregory, and enraged at the pontiff's having procured a bequest of the estates of the countess Matilda, to which he had a stronger claim, and instigated equally by shame and rage, he once more declared open war against the pontiff. The German bishops and nobles proceeded to choose Rodolph duke of Suabia, emperor, but the presence of Henry in Italy compelled Gregory to temporize, and he ordered his legates to support the competitor for empire who would exhibit most devotion to the Holy See. But though thus engaged in a dangerous struggle with the emperor of Ger-

many, he did not scruple to provoke most of the other monarchs of Europe: the king of France and the Norman Conqueror of England were threatened with ecclesiastical vengeance; the Byzantine emperor and the king of Poland were actually excommunicated; the king of Denmark was informed that his dominions formed part of the patrimony of Saint Peter; and it was announced that it would be better for Spain to remain in the hands of the Moors, than to be conquered by Christians who refused homage to the Church.

Success was to determine the indecision of Gregory; Rodolph gained a slight victory, the pope immediately repeated his excommunication against Henry, and sent his competitor a crown of gold, predicting that he would overcome all his adversaries. But the prophecy was not fulfilled; Henry summoned a council, deposed Gregory and raised his inveterate enemy, the archbishop of Ravenna, to the papacy with the title of Clement III. Soon after he encountered his rival on the banks of the Elster, and Rodolph fell by the hands of Godfrey of Bouillon, whose exploits in a far different war will soon engage our attention. Gregory in his turn experienced the reverses of fortune; Rome was taken and pillaged by the imperial forces, the pope fled to Salerno, where fatigue and mortification soon brought him to the grave. With his latest breath he protested against the Emperor and Clement, whom alone he excepted from his general absolution of those he had excommunicated during his pontificate. To the last, he maintained the rectitude of his conduct, applying to himself the celebrated words, "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and therefore I die an exile." (A.D. 1085.)

The spirit of Gregory seemed to animate his successors Victor III. and Urban II. The latter not only maintained the war against Henry, but excommunicated the king of France for having divorced his wife and married his mistress. After having thus insulted the monarch, he sum-

moned a general council in his dominions, without even asking his permission. In November 1095 the celebrated council of Clermont assembled, where the resolution for attempting the recovery of Palestine from the Mohammedans was finally adopted. It was further remarkable for the renewal of the sentence of excommunication against Philip, and the French monarch was unable to resent an injury aggravated by the council being held in his own dominions.

The Normans had not only established their supremacy over southern Italy and Sicily, but, under the command of Robert Guiscard, had subdued the important island of Corfu, and invaded Illyria and Greece. Dyrrachium, the key of the Greek empire on the western side, was taken after a long siege by Robert, and when he was recalled to Italy by pope Gregory, the conduct of the war was assumed by his son, the valiant but unscrupulous Bohemond, who subdued a great part of Epirus and Macedon. The death of Robert recalling Bohemond to secure his paternal inheritance, delivered the Byzantine empire from this scourge, but the feebleness produced by unsuccessful war greatly facilitated the progress of the Turks. The danger to which Eastern Europe was exposed daily became more pressing; the emperor Alexius became convinced that it could only be defended by Latin aid, not only because he had experienced the inferiority of his own soldiers, but also because a detachment of five hundred cavaliers sent to his aid by the count of Flanders had defended Nicomedia against the attacks of the Turkish Sultan more effectively than a large army of Greeks. Hoping to obtain efficient aid, he applied to pope Urban II. describing in forcible colours the evils to which Christendom would be exposed if Constantinople should fall under the power of the Mohammedans, and promising to give every assistance by land and sea to those who would engage in war with the infidels.

The Greek ambassadors appeared at the council of Placentia, to explain the unfortunate state of the Byzantine empire, and the need that the churches of the East had of aid from their western brethren. But the Italians had little sympathy for such complaints ; their hearts were too much engaged in the struggle for supremacy between the pope and the emperor, to form any wish for distant enterprizes ; they shrunk from the perils of an Eastern war, and the reports of the pilgrims who had visited the Holy Land were by no means calculated to overcome their reluctance.

But France and Germany, the theatre of sanguinary wars and religious feuds since the death of Charlemagne, were fully prepared to respond to the mingled summons of avarice, glory, and fanaticism. The thirst for war, the spirit of adventurous enterprize, pervaded every rank from the highest to the lowest ; the example of the Normans, who had won by their valour the kingdoms of Sicily and England, stimulated the nobles to carve out new monarchies by the sword. " The truce of God," imperfectly as it was observed, imposed some restraint on their robberies and their private wars ; they were weary of inactivity, and perhaps found it difficult to support their armed retainers. Under such circumstances, the proposal of a crusade was received with enthusiasm ; it was a war that promised absolution for the past, present glory and future riches.

A rising spirit of liberty among the lower ranks, fostered by the example of the towns where associations for mutual protection had laid the foundation of self-government, rendered the great body of the French and Germans willing to engage in a war where all pilgrims would rank on an equality as soldiers of Christ. There were also bands of military adventurers wandering through every part of Europe in search of employment, who preferred even the most hazardous expedition to poverty and idleness. But above all, the fanatical spirit of the age, already manifested in the

persecution of Jews and heretics, urged men to prove their devotion by destroying those whom they were taught to consider enemies of their God. It would therefore be an error to describe the crusades as the result of any sudden impulse; they were the full development of principles which had grown up during several centuries, and they accelerated the overthrow of these principles by hurrying them at once into excess.

CHAPTER XXII. *

The first Crusade.

(From A.D. 1074 to A.D. 1146.)

THE Crusades have been usually regarded as a kind of episode in the history of Europe; but a more minute examination of these celebrated wars will show that they are the best illustration of the religious and political principles which moulded European society into its new forms, and for ever obliterated the last traces of the Roman system of civilization. The causes and the effects of the wondrous efforts made to establish a Christian kingdom in Palestine have been and are the themes of ardent controversy, but the disputants have not arrived at a satisfactory conclusion because they have sought the origin of the movement in a single cause and laboured to trace its consequences in some one great and definite result. But there is really no such thing as an episode in history, there is no single series of events that can be detached without leaving a former series incomplete and a future unexplained. To trace all the causes of the Crusades would require a volume; it will be sufficient at present to indicate briefly the different motives of the persons engaged in them as they are severally introduced on the stage of action.

Hildebrand had scarcely ascended the papal throne with

the title of Gregory VII. when he contemplated a mighty scheme of reform which was to embrace at once the eastern and western worlds. His object was to render the ecclesiastical power a barrier against feudalism in Europe and the progress of Mohammedanism in Asia; to make the Church a bond of union between all the nations that professed Christianity, a refuge for the oppressed, a support to the weak, a comforter to all. We have already said that the end was glorious, but the means clearly mischievous, for the power that would be thus placed in the hands of the clergy would of necessity have been abused; such a spiritual despotism must have corrupted those by whom it was wielded, and crushed all subject to its sway. When the eastern Christians solicited the pope to prevent the utter ruin of Christianity in their country, Gregory wrote to the Emperor Henry, (Dec. 7th, A.D. 1074). "The East has claimed the assistance of the sovereign pontiff; the Church of Constantinople, so long divided from us by controversies respecting the procession of the Holy Ghost, is anxious to enter again into Christian unity, and the churches of Armenia are disposed to follow the same example." He added, "More than fifty thousand Christians in Italy and France have already intimated their readiness to follow me as their chief in this pious expedition, even to the Holy Sepulchre." He protested, "I am ready to march in person, and on quitting Rome I shall gladly commit the Church and its interests to the imperial protection." The wars between the pope and the emperor respecting investitures, diverted the attention of both from the condition of the Eastern churches. But like many other of the projects for the advancement of the papal power that Gregory was unable to realize, the plan was adopted by his successors to be developed at some future opportunity.

Alexius, after his accession to the throne of Constantinople, felt keenly the weakness of the Byzantine empire, and was anxious to obtain the support of the western Christ-

ians ; he wrote pressing letters begging for aid to pope Urban II. ; and he took the opportunity of the passage of Robert Count of Flanders through his dominions as a pilgrim, to contract a close friendship with that prince, and employ him as his advocate with the other European potentates. Four years after Count Robert's return, the crafty Alexius sent him a letter, designed as a circular to the monarchs of Christendom, in some parts of which he seems to have forgotten his usual prudence. In this epistle, the emperor eloquently depicted the horrible cruelties perpetrated by the Mussulmans on Christians of every sex and profession. He represented all Asia bowed down under the yoke of the infidels, and the imminent peril in which Constantinople was placed. He protested that he would rather see his metropolis in the hands of the Latins, who would at least respect the churches and sepulchres, than have it exposed to the ferocious Turks ; and as if blind to the dangers of awakening cupidity, he dwelt emphatically on the vast treasures that had been accumulated within the walls of Constantinople.

Powerful as were the exhortations of the Latin pope and the Greek emperor, both united would have failed to set Europe in motion, but for the aid of a personage apparently vile and despicable, but in the highest degree fiery and energetic. A poor hermit named Peter, a native of Picardy, low in stature, and mean in aspect, undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, and after enduring countless dangers and difficulties, reached Jerusalem.

Few cities in the world have been the theatre of so many calamities as " the daughter of Zion." Seventeen times it has been taken, pillaged, and all but levelled to the ground. Millions have been slaughtered in attack or defence around its walls ; the ground on which it stands is one vast charnel house. Yet in the midst of its successive desolations, the Jew, the Christian, and the Mussulman regarded the soil as holy, and eagerly sought to worship in a place which

they believed to be more peculiarly "the habitation of God's house and the place where his honour was dwelling." While the Saracenic empire was flourishing under the Abaside Khaliphs, the Christians of Palestine enjoyed toleration on the payment of a moderate tribute, and the visits of Latin pilgrims were not only permitted but encouraged both for the taxes they paid and the commerce they encouraged. But the Seljukian Turks, with the fanaticism of new converts and the ignorance of barbarians, cruelly maltreated the Christians and Jews of Palestine, plundered the pilgrims, and often murdered them in mere wantonness. The division of the Seljukian monarchy aggravated these calamities ; the safe conduct purchased from one horde of barbarians was disregarded by another, and the pilgrim after having sacrificed all his wealth to purchase a passport, found frequently that it afforded him no protection from murder or the horrors of slavery.

When Peter reached the Holy City, he felt greatly mortified at being forced to pay a piece of gold for permission to enter ; every step increased his indignation as he witnessed the wantonness of Turkish tyranny, the profanation of the holy places, and the shocking insults heaped on the patriarch and his clergy. He went to visit the venerable Simeon, who was then patriarch of Jerusalem, and spoke with so much energy of the evils he had witnessed, that the aged prelate opened his entire heart to the hermit, and laid before him a statement of the condition of Palestine, which Peter undertook to communicate to the princes of Europe. Simeon's account was to the following effect : he said that "the Khaliphate had been divided into the four sultanies of Mosu'l, Damascus, Aleppo and Nice ; that from the last city, where all the Christians had been massacred, troops of plunderers continually issued, who ravaged the entire country, sparing neither holy men nor holy places." He averred that "it was neither the prudence of Alexius, nor the number of the inhabitants, nor the strength

of the fortifications that defended Constantinople, but that its safety was owing wholly to the Bosphorus, and as soon as the infidels had acquired a fleet they would assuredly conquer that great city and pour thence like a torrent over all Christendom." He declared that "the prisons of Jerusalem were crowded with pilgrims, seized by the Turks in the hope of obtaining a large ransom, though they had already paid the stipulated sum for protection, and that the repeated exactions of taxes from the Christian residents of Jerusalem had reduced them to abject poverty." He said that "there was no hope of assistance from the Greeks, who were themselves in want of aid, but that if the Latin Christians combined, they might take advantage of the jealousies between the four sultanies, and overwhelm them in detail."

Peter after quitting the patriarch returned to his lodging, brooding over the interesting topics that had been discussed between them. The meditations of the day haunted his slumbers: he had a dream which he regarded as a divine revelation, summoning him to deliver Palestine; and he returned to Europe to spread the enthusiasm that had seized on his own soul.

On his return to Europe Peter sought an audience with pope Urban II., who encouraged him in his designs, and sent him as a missionary to the principal courts of Europe. Every where the hermit kindled an ardent desire for undertaking the liberation of Palestine. Prelates and priests, nobles and peasants, the virtuous and the vicious, were equally seized with enthusiasm, and many even of the softer sex declared their readiness to engage in this holy war. The Frank and Norman knights, inured to lives of adventure, were among the most eager followers of Peter; it was quite in accordance with their feudal notions to regard Palestine as a royalty appertaining to their Saviour; they knew not of his declaration, "My kingdom is not of this world," and in their ignorance believed themselves bound

by their religious as they assuredly were by their political allegiance, to recover the crown-lands of their lord. A more refined policy instigated a few, who saw the necessity of placing some check upon the increasing power of the Mohammedans; but the vast multitude had no other motive than simple fanaticism.

Urban II. proposed the crusade or croissade, as the war was called from the crosses worn by the soldiers, at the council of Placentia. (March 1, 1095.) The Italians highly applauded the undertaking, but few offered themselves as volunteers; accustomed to luxurious ease, the natives of Italy were too indolent or too wise to exchange their peaceful homes for remote undertakings, and uncertain advantages. Far different was the result of the council held at Clermont, in the course of the same year; it had been assembled by the pope in defiance of the French king, but it did not on that account produce the less effect on the French people. When Urban had eloquently portrayed the wretched state of Palestine, he promised the protection of the Church, to the families and properties of those who engaged in its redemption; he described the vast riches of Asia, which he declared were reserved to reward the faithful, and urged his hearers in the Divine name to undertake this holy war. From the assembled multitude burst forth the unanimous cry, "God wills it—God wills it!" In the enthusiasm of the moment, so many offered to take the cross, which was worn as a badge of enlistment on the right shoulder, that the supply of materials was exhausted, and many tore up their garments to furnish new crosses. This symbol was usually worn on the right shoulder, but many placed it on their back, in consequence of a perverted application of the text, "He who taketh not up his cross and followeth not me, is not worthy of me."

Peter had been a soldier before he became a monk; he was, therefore, easily persuaded to head a horde of ignorant volunteers; a second division was commanded by a brave,

but poor Norman gentleman, named Walter the Pennyless; a third division was formed of Germans, under the command of a priest named Godescale; and a fourth tumultuous body, consisting of the most ignorant and bigoted, marched on what they supposed the road to Palestine, without any determined leader. Whole families joined in this adventure; the farmer was to be seen driving a waggon, containing his wife and children; while around the lines were boys bearing mimic implements of war, mistaking every stranger for a Turk, and every new town for Jerusalem*. The ignorance of these fanatic hordes was lamentable; one division, as has been mentioned, had no fixed commander, but the credulous creatures reposed trust in a goat and a goose, which they believed to be sent from Heaven as their guides. Unregulated bigotry soon led to the most violent excesses; the Jews along the Rhine were the first victims of the crusading host, for the fanatics were persuaded that the sacrifice of this unfortunate race, would be the best propitiation that could be offered for their future success. Myriads of the hapless Jews were ruthlessly put to death, with bitter tortures and indignities; whole families committed suicide by mutual agreement, and a few submitted to be baptized, purchasing safety by apostasy†. The archbishop of Mayence made every exertion in

* Rabbi Joseph, describing this tumultuous host, appropriately quotes Prov. xxx. 27. "The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands."

† This persecution is very pathetically described in the Chronicles of Rabbi Joseph, from which, as the work is very rare, we shall make one or two extracts:

"That year (A. D. 1096) was a year of sorrow for Jacob; and they were given over to plunder in the countries of the uncircumcised, and in all the places where they were scattered. And upon them fell many sorrows and devastations, which are written in the law of Moses, and which cannot be told in a book; for the abominable Germans and French rose up against them—people of a fierce countenance, that have no respect to the persons of the old, neither have they mercy

his power to save these wretched victims, but had the mortification, in spite of his efforts, to witness their murder when they sought refuge in his own palace.

The march of these four irregular hordes was enough to have brought the name of crusader into disrepute, and their crimes, follies, and misfortunes, prevented the south-eastern monarchies of Europe from aiding the more regular efforts of the crusaders, who marched at a later period to victory. The first division of the fanatic multitude under Walter the Pennyless, traversed Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria. Want forced them to pillage; the Hungarians became their enemies, and seizing sixteen apart from the

upon the young. And they said, 'Let us be revenged for our Messiah, upon the Jews which are amongst us; and let us destroy them from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be had no more in remembrance: so shall they change their glory, and they will be like unto us:—then we will go to the east.' And they entered and slew them which were found there with the edge of the sword, they had no compassion upon man nor woman. And they pulled down houses, and cast down the strong places, and they put forth their hand to the spoil, and there was none to deliver out of their hand, in the day of the Lord's vengeance. And the books of the Law they cast to the ground, and trod them under their feet, and they uttered their voice in the house of the Lord as in a day of a solemn feast. And they said, 'Aha! this is the day for which we have longed;' and they devoured Israel in every corner. O Lord, behold, and see! They left none alive, save the children and sucklings, which were defiled with the proud water (that is, were baptized,) by force. But it came to pass afterwards, that they esteemed their fear as vanity, and their persons as the mire of the streets; and they said, 'Let us return to the Lord our God,' because fury was over them, and the slain did sanctify the Holy One of Israel in the eyes of the sun; and they chose death rather than life, for they refused to be defiled. Many did slay themselves, every one his brother, and his neighbour, his sons and his daughters, the bridegroom and the bride, the wife of his bosom. And from compassion the women slew their children with all their heart and with all their soul; and they said, 'HEAR O ISRAEL' (the first words of the Jewish confession of faith), when their souls were poured out into their mothers' bosoms." *Rabbi Joseph's Chronicles*, Vol. I. 30—33. Published by the Oriental Translation Committee.

main body, not only put them to death, but exposed their limbs in cruel mockery. The Bulgarians received the hungry crusaders with open war, and Walter was only able to bring a small remnant of his forces under the walls of Constantinople, where he had appointed to meet Peter.

The hermit, whose line of march lay to the south of Walter's, proceeded safely until he reached the Hungarian town where the sixteen crusaders had been murdered. At the sight of their unburied limbs, and on hearing the story of their miserable fate, Peter's army, scarcely waiting for his permission, assailed the town with resistless fury, carried it by storm, and put all the inhabitants to the sword: the Hungarians, in retaliation, harassed the crusaders on their march, and before they could enter Bulgaria, destroyed several stragglers from the rear-guard. But in Bulgaria, the excesses of the undisciplined rabble produced more fatal effects; the governor of Nissa, roused by their excesses, at length attacked the horde and routed the crusaders with great slaughter. Peter with great difficulty collected the remnant of his shattered forces, and joined the equally disorganised troops of Walter, under the walls of Constantinople.

Alexius long before this, had bitterly repented his eager supplications for assistance from the west. In the armies of Walter and Peter, he saw nothing but ignorant peasants, whom fanaticism and suffering had equally combined to demoralize; in the respectable armament of regular forces which he learned was about to follow, he heard at the same time that the Normans with whom he had been so recently at war, would bear a conspicuous part. But the excesses committed by the followers of Peter in the suburbs of Constantinople, constituted his most pressing danger, and he hastily provided a fleet to transport them across the straits.

The conduct of the Greek emperor has been very severely censured, by most western writers; but when we

take into consideration the nature and composition of the armies led by Peter and Walter, we cannot blame Alexius for striving to protect his subjects from their excesses. Neither did he expose them to destruction as has been asserted; he assigned them as quarters the town of Cibotus, which he had begun to build for the Saxon refugees, who had fled from England to the eastern extremity of Europe, after the Norman conquest, and he took care that the adventurers should be supplied with provisions at a reasonable price.

Two months of ease at Cibotus restored the crusaders to their former vigour, but at the same time greatly increased their spirit of insubordination. They had been advised to wait patiently the arrival of their comrades from Europe, but while Peter was absent in Constantinople, a large body made an incursion into the territories of the Sultan of Nice, and not content with sweeping the flocks and herds, inflicted the most horrible tortures on the inhabitants. Kilij Arslan*, Sultan of Nice, who had levied a numerous army on the first intelligence of the vast preparations made in Europe, attacked the marauders, and routed them with great slaughter. The Franks in Cibotus, were eager to revenge the loss of their brethren, and though Walter strenuously dissuaded them from hazarding a battle prematurely with the Turkish forces, he was unable to restrain their ardour, and was forced to lead them to the field. They

* Most of the western historians have fallen into the mistake, of very ancient origin, that Soliman was Sultan of Nice, at the time of the first crusade. But Soliman had been slain A. D. 1085, in a battle with Tutush, the brother of Melek Shah, between Aleppo and Antioch; and had been succeeded by his son David, who took the surname of Kilij Arslan, that is, "the sword of the lion." In the brief history of the crusades inserted in this volume, the Christian accounts have been compared with Reinaud's valuable collection of the Arabian Chronicles. Many of the subsequent notes are taken from this interesting work.

found Kilij Arslan prepared to receive them ; the crusaders rushed boldly to the combat, but they were outnumbered by the Turks, entangled in difficult and unknown ground, and finally surrounded. It was a slaughter rather than a fight ; Walter and his bravest soldiers fell ; a few cut their way to the camp, but they were closely pursued, their entrenchments stormed, and their wives and children placed at the mercy of the conquerors. Alexius sent his navy to bring off the miserable remnant of these adventurers, first depriving them of their arms, to prevent the renewal of their former outrages. Such was the fate of the first army, whose conduct justly prejudiced the Greeks against the cause of the crusaders, and whose overthrow enabled the Turks to boast that the Christians who had come to insult Asia were a herd of wretched poltroons wholly destitute of military experience.

Peter the hermit had not been able to visit Germany, on account of the schism between the princes of that country and the empire, but his place was supplied by a Bavarian priest named Godescale, who collected a horde rather than an army of ignorant peasants, and led them to the borders of Hungary. They were at first treated very kindly, but at length their repeated outrages * roused the whole Hungarian nation ; the pilgrims were attacked on every side, but they defended themselves with vigour ; being however in want of provisions, they were persuaded to lay down their arms as a necessary preliminary to peace, and in this defenceless state they were treacherously assailed and massacred. Godescale escaped almost alone and returned to his parish, with little inclination to act again the part of a general.

The fourth horde was equally unfortunate ; the goose and goat that they had chosen as guides were not inappropriate

* Some of these wretches impaled a young Hungarian nobleman, who resisted one of their plundering bands.

leaders while the crusaders were engaged in murdering the helpless Jews, but when they came into contact with the warlike Hungarians, a panic seized the disorganised crowd, and the wretches were cut down by myriads without resistance.

While these helpless fanatics were thus disgracing their cause, a regular army, commanded by the flower of the Christian chivalry, had been formed. One division, commanded by Godfrey of Bouillon, marched to Hungary, and found the king and his people disposed to treat them with kindness and respect. A second division proceeded over the Alps into Italy, intending to pass over to Greece by sea; it was commanded by Hugh, the brother of the king of France, and with him were Robert duke of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror, Stephen count of Blois, Eustace, the brother of Godfrey, Stephen earl of Albemarle, and Bishop Odo earl of Kent. The inhabitants of Gascony, Provence and the south of France sent a numerous and well-appointed army, under the command of Raymond count of Toulouse; this brave leader took a new route, marching round the north of the Adriatic, and through the provinces of the ancient Epirus, where he encountered many difficulties from the ruggedness of the roads, and the jealous hostility of the inhabitants. But the body of crusaders that most alarmed Alexius was composed of the Normans from the south of Italy, commanded by his inveterate enemy Bohemond, prince of Tarentum, and the gallant Tancred.

Alexius having heard that Hugh, brother of the king of France, had come to Greece, in order to reconnoitre the country, invited him to Constantinople, and perfidiously detained him as a hostage. Godfrey, on hearing this intelligence, hastened his march, and entered the Byzantine territories as an enemy. His victorious career alarmed Alexius, Hugh was set at liberty, and Godfrey invited to Constantinople. Frequent disputes arose between the Greeks and Latins; the camp of the crusaders was

pitched in the suburbs of the city, and scarcely a day passed without some conflict between the citizens and the allies they had so unwisely invited. At length Godfrey entered into a treaty with Alexius, in pursuance of which, the crusaders removed their camp across the strait to Chalcedon *, where they soon experienced the perfidy of the Byzantines, who, in defiance of the recent treaty, raised the prices of provisions to an exorbitant height.

Godfrey had performed homage to the emperor for the ancient Byzantine provinces he was about to conquer in Asia, and had promised to yield up the principal cities that should be recovered from the Infidels; but Bohemond was very reluctant to ratify such an agreement. He was as crafty and unprincipled as Alexius, and he met the emperor with the most profound dissimulation. Their interview was an extraordinary piece of acting; Alexius pretended to admire the valour which the Tarentine prince had shown in his wars with the Greek empire; Bohemond declared that his homage came from a heart warmly attached to Alexius. While these insincere professions were interchanged, a young French count, indignant at seeing Alexius alone seated, went and sat down next him on the throne; and was with some difficulty persuaded to apologize for this breach of etiquette. Raymond count of Toulouse was the last to reach Constantinople; he sternly refused to pay homage, and compelled Alexius to treat him with respect.

Soon after the arrival of the crusaders in Asia they were joined by Peter the Hermit, with the relics of his miserable host. The recital of the calamities that their brethren had suffered inflamed the ardour of the crusaders, and they eagerly desired to be led against the enemy. On the 14th of May, 1097, Godfrey reviewed the assembled army of the Christians in the plains of Nice, and found that it amounted to more than half a million of souls. In this calculation however, probably the women, the children, and the fol-

* The modern Scutari.

lowers of the camp are included. The operations of the campaign commenced on the following day with the siege of Nice, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Bithynia, a strongly fortified city, situated on the lake of Ascanius. Kilij Arslan left his capital to collect an army sufficient to encounter the crusaders, after having exhorted the citizens to persevere until he could come to their relief. But, notwithstanding the valour of the garrison, the crusaders pushed on the siege so vigorously, that the city was soon reduced to the greatest distress, and its defence became hopeless. Alexius had aided the Latins with a flotilla on the lake, and had opened a secret communication with the Saracenic governor. He promised if the city were surrendered to the imperial forces that it should be saved from pillage, and thus acquired the prize for which his allies had laboured. On the very morning that the crusaders were preparing to storm the walls, they were astonished to see the Byzantine banner waving from the battlements. Justly indignant, they were about to renew the siege against their perfidious allies, when Godfrey succeeded in calming their indignation, by showing that the Greeks by withholding provisions could defeat their entire enterprize.

Towards the end of June, the crusaders broke up their camp, and leaving the fertile fields of Bithynia, entered the parched plains of Phrygia. They marched in two divisions: one on the left commanded by Bohemond, Tancred, and Robert of Normandy; the other on the right headed by Godfrey. On the 1st of July, as they were passing through a valley near Dorylæum*, the crusaders heard the tramp of an approaching army, and the cries of war in an unknown tongue. These sounds announced the arrival of Kilij Arslan with an army of confederate Turks, and hasty arrangements were made for battle. The aged, the sick, and the women, had scarcely been secured behind the

* The modern Eski Shehr.

baggage, when the archers of the Turks commenced the fight by a shower of arrows, which severely galled the Christian lines. The battle soon became fierce; each party had miscalculated the strength of their opponents; Kilij Arslan supposed that he should have to encounter only such a mob as he had before conquered; the crusaders were persuaded that the Turks would never stand against a disciplined army. In all the skirmishing and distant assaults Kilij Arslan had a decided superiority, and already the Christian lines were beginning to waver, and the cowardly to fly to the rear, when Raymond and the Provençals closing with the enemy, changed the fortunes of the day. Godfrey seized the decisive moment to charge at the head of the cavalry. The light horses of the Turks, and their half naked riders, armed only with bows and scymetars, were borne down by the weight of the European steeds and the ponderous lances of the knights; Kilij Arslan was at length forced to fly, after having witnessed the destruction of his bravest soldiers. This battle inspired both parties with mutual respect for each other's valour, but it led the crusaders to believe that the conquest of Palestine was a task more difficult than they had anticipated.

The continuation of the march of the crusaders was one unvarying scene of distress and dissension. Hunger and thirst assailed them in the arid plains of Pisidia and Lycaonia; many deserted, others went individually on predatory expeditions. But their bravery did not fail them: Tancred conquered Cilicia, and Baldwin having liberated Edessa from danger was chosen sovereign of that principality. Finally, on the 21st of October, they arrived in sight of the city of Antioch, and having forced a passage over the Orontes*, encamped within a mile of the walls.

Antioch was at this time governed by the emir Bag-

* Called Farfar by the Orientals.

hisian *, an old general who had served under Melek Shah. He prepared to make a vigorous resistance, and his resolutions were strongly supported by his brave garrison. It would be impossible in our limited space to give an adequate description of the events of this celebrated siege †. For three months the besiegers were supported by the fertile country around Antioch, but reckless of the future they soon exhausted their resources, and when winter set in with unusual severity, its horrors were aggravated by famine. Pestilence, the companion of want, soon spread through the camp; the crusaders perished by thousands, so that there was scarcely room to bury the dead: the horses either died for want of provender or were slain for food. Treachery and desertion were added to these calamities; the Greek division was suspected of secret intercourse with the enemy; Alexius was believed to have joined in a league for their destruction ‡; many of those who had been the most zealous promoters of the war began to desert; even the Hermit himself fled, but he was brought back amid loud reproaches. The crusaders believed that these accumu-

* The baron de Sacy says his true name was Aghú-sian or Aghisian; but he is called Baghi-sian by the Arabian historians.

† Most of the events which Tasso, in his celebrated poem, has described as occurring at Jerusalem, really took place during the siege of Antioch.

‡ The unfortunate loss of Sweno, prince of Denmark, greatly increased these suspicions. This brave youth was leading a gallant army to aid the crusaders, accompanied by Florina, the daughter of the duke of Burgundy, whose hand was to be the meed of his valour, when Jerusalem was won. He was received with all due honour at Constantinople, and conveyed across the Bosphorus, in the imperial fleet. But on his march through Phrygia, he was surrounded at night by a Turkish army and cut to pieces. The crusaders at Antioch were firmly persuaded that Alexius had given Kilij Arslan secret information of the prince's route; and the accurate knowledge displayed by the Turks in forming their ambuscade, certainly afforded plausible grounds for suspicion.

lated calamities must be a divine visitation, and this opinion was confirmed by an earthquake and a remarkably brilliant *Aurora Borealis*. A fast was proclaimed, persons of immoral conduct were expelled the camp, and the religious spirit of the warriors revived by solemn processions.

The return of spring changed the condition of the crusaders; convoys of provisions began to arrive from the Italian ports, and several triumphs were gained over the Turkish armies that endeavoured to raise the siege. On the other hand, the garrison of Antioch, witnessing the successive defeats of their brethren, lost much of its former courage, and there were many among the citizens anxious to treat for a surrender. An Armenian renegade named Pyrrhus*, resolved to take advantage of these circumstances, and secretly opened a negociation with Bohemond, whose character for intrigue was rather notorious. At the moment when the council of the Christian chiefs was thrown into confusion by the news of a large army approaching to raise the siege, Bohemond offered to ensure the immediate capture of Antioch, provided that the city should be assigned over to his sovereignty. After some opposition, in which Raymond took the lead, these terms were accepted, and on the same night, (June 3rd, 1098), the traitor Pyrrhus† betrayed a tower and a gate to Bohemond, and the crusaders rushed in to the spoil. Baghi-sian defended the city inch by inch, and afforded time for his son, with the best soldiers of the garrison, to secure the citadel; he then fled with a few friends to the mountains, where he fell by the hand of an assassin‡.

* Called Phirouz and Firúz by the oriental historians.

† Pyrrhus, dissatisfied with the reward he received, again deserted to the Saracens, betraying a Christian detachment to them; he finally became a captain of banditti, and perished miserably.

‡ He tumbled from his horse through weakness, and was deserted by his attendants; his groans caught the ear of a Syrian Christian, who inhumanly murdered the brave old man, and brought his head to the camp of the crusaders.

The sufferings that the besiegers had endured would only be equalled by the vengeance they exacted ; Mussulmans and Christians, age and infancy, males and females in the unhappy city, were tortured and butchered ; several days elapsed before it was possible to restore the discipline of an army madly bent on murder and plunder.

But the adventurers found that the capture of Antioch was far from removing their difficulties. The citizens had suffered from famine as well as themselves, and where they hoped to obtain plentiful stores they found only empty walls. A very few days after their triumph they were besieged in their turn by a powerful army of confederate Turks, under the command of Kerboga, the prince of Mosul, one of the most redoubted warriors of the east*.

The citadel was still in the possession of the Turks, and Kerboga soon opened a communication with its defenders ; he then began to hem in the Christians, and famine once more wasted the pilgrim army. Those who had deserted their high enterprize, endeavoured to excuse their defection by exaggerated descriptions of the miseries endured by the crusaders ; Alexius, who was marching at length to their aid, gladly availed himself of such a plausible pretext for

* This army, amounting to nearly 400,000 men, had been raised by Barkiaroka, the sultan of Khorassan, who, though so remote from the seat of action, was anxious to support the power of every branch of the Seljukian dynasty.

In most, if not all, English histories of the crusades, the Saracens are said to be the enemies against whom the Christians contended. Now, the fact is, that the only independent Saracenic power then in existence, that of the Fatimite Khaliphs in Egypt, was for some time in alliance with the crusaders, against the Turks, the common enemies of both. Nothing has tended more to confuse the history of the middle ages, especially that portion of it more immediately connected with eastern nations, than the loose application of names. It is here sufficient to remind our readers that the Saracens came from Arabia, and the Seljukian Turks, who succeeded to their empire about a century before the crusades, from the countries east of the Caspian.

returning home; and the crusaders sunk into a state of hopeless dejection.

A pretended miracle revived the energy of the adventurers and inspired them with a vigour that triumphed over all difficulties. Peter Bartholomæus, a Provençal priest, probably instigated by count Raymond, asserted that on the night of the earthquake already mentioned, St. Andrew had appeared to him in a vision, and informed him that the lance with which the Saviour's side had been pierced was concealed near a pillar in one of the churches of Antioch. He added, that not only the Apostle but Christ himself had subsequently visited him, and reproached him for not having communicated this intelligence to the chiefs of the army. Search was made in the spot thus described, and a lance-head discovered. This event, felicitously called the *Invention* * of the Holy Lance, was hailed with the utmost enthusiasm, and the crusaders boldly resolved to march against the enemy. On the morning of the 28th of June, they advanced in six divisions against the Turks, and scarcely waiting to form their lines rushed furiously to the charge.

At this moment some of the leaders saw or thought they saw, three persons in white raiment descending from the hills: they exclaimed that the martyrs were come from the regions of bliss to aid in the battle for the faith; the tale passed from rank to rank infusing ardour into every bosom; the Turkish lines could not resist the furious onset; they were broken by the first desperate effort, and all Kerboga's efforts to retrieve the fortunes of the day were unavailing. The slaughter was immense; it is said that more than one hundred thousand Turks were left on the field of battle, while the loss of the Christians scarcely exceeded four thousand.

Bohemond obtained possession of the principality of Antioch, in spite of the efforts of count Raymond, who

* From the Latin *inventio*, "a finding."

declared that Saint Andrew had bestowed the city upon him, as the price of his guarding the Holy Lance ; but this invention having served its purpose, fell rapidly into discredit, especially as the advantages that the Provençals derived from guarding the relic excited the jealousy of the rest of the army *. A pestilence, probably produced by the sudden change from want to plenty, prevented the Christians from immediately reaping the fruits of their great victory ; and the discord between the leaders seemed more than once to threaten the ruin of the expedition. It was late in the following spring, when the march to Jerusalem was begun. On the morning of the 8th of June, A.D. 1099, the crusaders for the first time obtained a view of the holy city from a distant hill ; all their toils and sufferings were forgotten ; they fell upon their knees, they kissed the sacred ground, they sung hymns and psalms, and supplicated divine aid for the completion of their undertaking. Not a tenth of those who had been reviewed two years before on the plains of Nice, survived ; yet those who had passed through so many calamities, felt that they were amply repaid for their sufferings, by being permitted to behold the place where their Saviour had died to expiate the sins of mankind.

Jerusalem had recently fallen under the sway of the Fatimite Khaliphs, and was consequently garrisoned by forces from Egypt. The strength of the besieged was nearly equal to that of the besiegers, and as at Antioch, the crusaders suffered severely from the scarcity of provisions. Water was very scarce, and wood for the battering engines, could only be procured from a distance. In the midst of their difficulties, they learned that a large Egyptian army

* Poor Peter Bartholomæus, the original discoverer of the lance, could not endure the general scepticism, and offered to prove the truth of his assertions by the fiery ordeal. On an appointed day, he rushed through a flaming pile bearing the Holy Lance in his hand ; he came out alive, but the injuries he had received, soon after proved fatal. Thus the delusion and its author perished together.

was preparing to raise the siege, and it was therefore resolved to hazard an immediate assault. The day before that appointed for this daring enterprize, the pilgrims marched round the city in solemn procession; those who had been at variance were reconciled; those who had committed crimes, made atonement by solemn confession, and a spirit of devotion spread through the army that fitly prepared them for their great effort. This enthusiasm was stung to madness by the Saracens, who with indecent mockery parodied the religious ceremonies of the crusaders, and vented upon them the most irritating blasphemies.

At day-break, on the morning of the 15th of July (A.D. 1099), the preparations for the assault were complete; scaling ladders and wooden towers with moveable bridges were brought up to the walls, and "the sun had not risen upon the earth," when the trumpets sounded the charge. The bridges were cast from the towers to the walls, the soldiers sprung upon them, or grasped at the scaling ladders. On the other hand, the Mussulmans flung huge stones and beams of timber on the assailants, hurled pots of burning oil and sulphur on the bridges, and cast fiery darts against the towers. The struggle lasted the entire day, and was terminated by the closing in of night, without either party having gained any decisive advantage; but the Christians were filled with hope, because a crucifix that had been erected on the top of Godfrey's tower remained uninjured.

With the early dawn the battle was renewed, and continued under a burning Syrian sun until noon was long passed. Both sides were relaxing their efforts from utter weariness, when Godfrey declared that he saw a celestial messenger cheering the Christians to the combat on the Mount of Olives. The enthusiasm of the crusaders thus rekindled bore down every obstacle; they made good their lodgment on the wall, and the Mohammedans fled into the

city in confusion. The banner of the cross was then planted on the towers of Jerusalem, while the hills around re-echoed the shouts of triumph from the Christian army*.

* The capture of Jerusalem spread universal sorrow through all the Mohammedan nations. The elegy on the occasion, of which a translation is subjoined, was composed by Abivardi, a poet at the court of the Khaliphs of Bagdad. It is remarkable not only as a specimen of the feelings and literature of the period, but for the curious selection of motives by which the poet strives to rouse his brethren.

In mingled streams together flow,
The blood of life, the tears of woe;
Our strength is gone, our hopes are reft,
And nought but shame and sorrow left.

Sons of Isla'm,—all tears are vain
When beaming sabres light the plain;
'Tis yours the fatal fight to meet
Where heads are rolling at the feet.

Can warriors sink in soft repose,
Can tranquil sleep their eyelids close,
While round them is a summons sped
That well might wake the mouldering dead?

Your Syrian brethren know not rest,
Their camels' backs are ceaseless press'd;
Chang'd only for the sha'kal's jaw,
Or for the vulture's ravenous maw.

They hear the Christians' cruel taunt,
The Grecian scorn, the Roman vaunt;
While you, to coming dangers blind,
The robes of peace around you bind.

What streams of blood have flow'd in vain!
Helpless the Syrian dames remain,
With nothing but their hands to hide
From lawless eyes their beauty's pride.

The lances join with shivering crash,
With lightning gleam the sabres flash,
And war puts on an aspect dread
That e'en might blanch an infant's head.

The description of the unfurling of the sacred standard in Tasso's poem, must not be omitted :

The glorious ensign in a thousand wreaths,
And folds voluminous rejoicing twines ;
It seems the wind on it more sweetly breathes ;
It seems the sun on it more brightly shines :
That each toss'd javelin, each arm'd shaft declines
To strike the staff.—The streets Hosannas sound,
Floods clap their hands, on mountains dance the pines :
Seems it that Sion's hills with verdure crown'd,
Stoop from the clouds their crests, and bend adoring round.

Such is this war, that those who yield
To coward fear, and quit the field,
Shall yet in madness and despair
Grind their set teeth and tear their hair.

Mohammed quits his holy grave
And calls to arms the good and brave.
Hark!—heard ye not his piercing cries ?
“ Sons of Isla'm! awake! arise.

“ Away be sloth and chilling fear ;
“ Draw forth the sabre, grasp the spear.
“ Religion totters to its fall :—
“ Protect it;—save it;—one and all.”

The coward who avoids the strife,
For worse than death preserves his life ;
Disgrace,—a wound that ne'er can close,
Shall press him with unnumber'd woes.

Can Arab chiefs forget their fame,
And bear this bitter load of shame ?
Can Persia's warriors vile and base,
Their ancient glories thus deface ?

Oh! if no more their bosoms feel
The ardour of religious zeal,
Still may they haste to save their wives',
Their parents', and their children's lives !

If Heaven's rewards, or honour's call,
Upon their ears unheeded fall,
Shall not the wealthy spoil invite
Our warriors once more to the fight ?

But the triumph of the Christians was sullied by a massacre more indiscriminate and unsparing than that which had been perpetrated at Antioch. A helpless crowd had sought refuge in the Mosque of Omar, the gates were speedily forced, and the fugitives slaughtered without mercy: "we rode," said the knights, "in Saracen blood up to the knees of our horses." Nor were the Mussulmans the only victims; the helpless Jews who had been permitted to dwell in their ancient city, were sacrificed by the crusaders as the hereditary enemies of their Lord, and those who were suspected of having concealed treasures, were subjected to the most excruciating tortures. Evening was come when the crusaders suddenly recollected that they were in the holy city, containing those places that had been hallowed by the presence of a crucified Saviour. As if by some common impulse, the savage warriors were suddenly changed into devout pilgrims; the shouts of the conquerors, and the shrieks of helpless victims, were hushed; each man hastened to remove from his person the stains of carnage, and then with bare head and feet ascended the hill of Calvary to the tomb of the Holy Sepulchre. The services of religion were performed by the clergy of Jerusalem, who hailed their deliverers with enthusiastic gratitude, and especially lauded Peter the Hermit for having so amply fulfilled the promises he had made five years before.

The election of a king, while the crusaders were animated by these devout feelings, produced no discord. Godfrey, of Bouillon, was unanimously chosen; but when the ceremony of coronation was to be performed, he refused to wear a crown of gold where his Saviour had worn a crown of thorns. This petty kingdom, so limited in extent, and so brief in its duration, had been purchased by the lives of a million of the best soldiers of Christendom, and countless multitudes were still to be sacrificed for its maintenance, or its recovery.

About two months had elapsed since the conquest of

Jerusalem, when news arrived that an Egyptian army commanded by the Emi'r Afdal was advancing to attempt its recovery. The crusaders, who had been recently stimulated by a new "invention," a crucifix, said to contain part of the true cross, unhesitatingly marched to meet an army four times as numerous as their own, and without hesitation commenced the attack. The battle was fought within sight of the walls of Ascalon, and the small forces of the Christians were further weakened by the necessity of leaving a division to watch the garrison. But notwithstanding all these disadvantages, they gained so decisive a victory, that numbers of the adventurers, believing that Jerusalem was now secure, took their leave of Godfrey, and returned to Europe.

Godfrey died full of glory after a brief reign of one year, and was succeeded by his brother Baldwin, prince of Edessa. In addition to the kingdom of Jerusalem, three Christian principalities had been established in Asia: Edessa, over which Baldwin ruled, Antioch, which Bohemond had secured, and Tripoli, which count Raymond had conquered for himself. But these petty states regarded each other as rivals; the Greek emperor heartily hated them all; and the papal legates claimed an authority which the warlike princes were very reluctant to acknowledge. Baldwin proved worthy of the crown he had obtained; he enlarged the boundaries of his kingdom, and greatly increased its security by the capture of Acre. He made several successful incursions into the territories of the Egyptian Khaliphs, who had hoped to acquire the dominion of Syria, and were therefore become the enemies of the crusaders. He died in one of these expeditions, (A.D. 1118), requesting with his latest breath that his body should be buried in Jerusalem, and that Baldwin de Bourg, the prince of Edessa, should be chosen his successor.

Baldwin II. exerted as much vigour, but was not so successful as his predecessor; several independent expeditions,

undertaken by various bodies of adventurers against the Turks, were defeated, and the mutual animosities of the Christian princes produced ruinous civil wars. The king, at length weary of his unprofitable royalty, and penitent for the sins of his former life, resigned the crown to his son-in-law Foulke ; and entered a monastery, where he died a few weeks after his abdication (A.D. 1131.)

Two military orders, instituted for the defence of Palestine, formed the chief strength of the kingdom. The Knights Hospitallers were originally warriors, who had laid aside their swords, and devoted themselves to tending the sick and wounded, and to relieving the poorer classes of pilgrims. They were formed into a monastic body, under a Grand Master, in the beginning of Foulke's reign, and as their numbers increased, they gradually assumed a military character. Their cognizance was a white cross, and their patron was St. John of Jerusalem, by whose name they are frequently designated *.

The Templars were from the beginning a military as well as a monastic body : in addition to the usual vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, they promised that they would incessantly war against the infidels in defence of the pilgrims and the Holy Land. These two orders of knighthood obtained vast tracts of land, either by grant or bequest, in almost every European country ; riches soon corrupted their original purity, and in spite of their vows of poverty and piety, they became the most wealthy and profligate bodies in Europe.

An equally celebrated institution arose among the Mo-

* In London, the Knights Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John, had a splendid residence at Clerkenwell, near the spot where this work has been printed. The inns of court, commonly called the Temple, belonged to the Templars, or Red-Cross Knights. The chapel is almost the only part of the building that has been preserved ; there have been recently found in it the tombs and effigies of several of the Knights, which are well worthy the attention of antiquarians.

hammedans, which spread the terror of its name over Europe and Asia. Among the sects formed, in consequence of the disputes respecting the Khaliphate, was one named the Ismâélians, because they believed that Ismâel, a descendant of Ali, was the last legitimate Ima'm, or expounder of the faith, and they supposed that he was not dead but concealed from human sight, to reappear at a future time, when he should conquer and judge the world. Hassan-ebn-Sabah, one of this sect*, a little before the first crusade, founded the order of the Assassins. whose members assuming different characters and disguises, murdered at the command of the Grand Master, every one, no matter what his rank or station, who was deemed an enemy of the order. Their first seat was the mountain-castle of Alamût, that is, "the Vulture's nest" in northern Persia†, but spreading from thence along the mountain ranges, they occupied a series of almost impregnable castles from the east of the Caspian to the shores of the Mediterranean. They were equally the foes of the Crusaders and the Mussulmans, and those who cared not for odds in the battle-field learned to tremble at the name of the Assassins.

When Baldwin du Bourg removed to Jerusalem, the sovereignty of Edessa was conferred on Joscelin de Courtenay, one of the original crusaders, and among the bravest warriors that had joined in the expedition. His principality, the only possession of the Christians beyond the Euphrates, was deemed an important outpost of the kingdom of Jerusalem, and was consequently subject to incessant

* The real origin of this name, which has now passed into every European language, is unknown. Baron de Sasy says, that it is derived from *Hashish*, an-intoxicating beverage made from hemp-seed, which they were in the habit of using.

† Hence the Grand Master was called *Sheikh-al-Jabal*, that is, "Lord of the Mountain," but from the equivocal signification of the word *Sheikh*, he is more frequently called "The Old Man of the Mountain" by western writers.

attacks. While the gallant old Joscelin lived, the Turks were unable to make any impression on the country of Edessa; but when he fell at the moment of obtaining a great victory by the mere terror of his name, his son Joscelin II. lost by cowardice and incapacity all that his father had acquired by valour and wisdom.

Hitherto the Franks had been successful because the Seljukian Turks, distracted by internal wars, could not be brought to unite against the common enemy. Suddenly there appeared a prince equally eminent as a warrior and a statesman; Zenghi*, prince of Mosu'l and Aleppo, united the Turks together, by the strength of his character, and not only restrained the Christians within their own boundaries, but recovered from them several of their conquests. Foulke himself was surrounded by Zenghi's army in one of his expeditions, and forced to purchase his deliverance by the payment of a large ransom. The Greek emperor John† made a diversion in favour of the crusaders, by invading northern Syria; but the old jealousy between the Greeks and Latins prevented them from acting in concert, and after the death of John, the Byzantine empire sunk into its former state of imbecility. Foulke died soon after, leaving his kingdom to his son Baldwin, a youth only thirteen years of age. The regency was entrusted to the queen Melisinda, a woman of a masculine spirit, but unable to encounter the dangers and difficulties of the time.

At length Zenghi laid siege to Edessa, which had been abandoned by its unworthy ruler, and after encountering an obstinate resistance took the city by storm. This success diffused great joy through all the Mohammedan world, and filled Christendom with dismay. It became manifest that a second crusade was necessary to protect the kingdom of

* He is called *Sanguinus* by the Latin historians; his proper name was Emad-ed-di'n, "the pillar of the faith."

† Called in derision Handsome John, or Kalo-Johannes, on account of his irregular features and swarthy complexion.

Jerusalem, and preparations were made by the pope to rouse once more the enthusiasm of Europe. The death of Zenghi* seemed to afford a favourable opportunity of recovering the ancient territories of the Christians; but his son and successor Nu'r-ed-di'n† proved a still more formidable enemy.

* We extract from the History of the Attabegs the following brief account of the Death and Character of Zenghi. Zenghi was assassinated during his sleep, by some of his mamelukes, whilst he was besieging the castle of Jabar (in Syria). His murderers fled into the castle, and declared what they had done. Intelligence of the event was immediately transmitted to the besiegers. Zenghi's servants ran to his couch, and found him breathing his last. Thus died Zenghi: a bright morning darkened ere its noon; his power availed not to prevent the triumph of death; his soldiers and armies could not protect him; his riches and his palaces helped him not; his mamelukes and his warriors could not arrest the stroke of Fate; his fortresses and his provinces could not save him from destruction; his hopes were baffled; he terminated his career abandoned by his slaves and his friends. Oh, what a star of Islamism was eclipsed! what a protector was lost to religion! what an ocean of goodness became dry! what a full moon of virtues set! what a noble lion became the prey of inferior animals! What pains he took to improve the provinces, and establish order! what anxiety he displayed to shield his subjects! When he had reached the term of his desires, when he had extended the boundaries of his empire, and become formidable to nations; when his authority was confirmed, his difficulties levelled, his anxieties at an end; when he had humbled the Turks, the Franks and the Greeks; when all trembled before him; he fell beneath Azrael, the exterminator of nations, who sweeps away the young and old. Death seized him, power abandoned him; his guards and attendants retired, his servants and friends withdrew. Death separated him from all his riches; it made a sport of him who was master of the lives of others; it dragged him from the luxurious couch on which he was extended, threw him upon the earth, and gave him a grave for his bed. Thenceforward he abode in that place, where men are judged only by their actions; where repentance is of no avail; where the book of man's deeds is closed; where the volume of rewards and punishments is opened. Deprived of such a support, Islamism pined away, and had a sorrowful countenance. Infidelity, delivered from its fiercest enemy, appeared full of joy, and grew fat.

† "The light of the faith."

Edessa revolted to its ancient master, but it was soon conquered again by Nu'r-ed-di'n, and the greater part of the garrison put to the sword (A.D. 1146).

The indignation and regret caused by the loss of this important city, caused the second crusade; but before entering on its history, we must examine the political and social condition of western Europe, while its bravest warriors were wasting their energies in Palestine.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Political condition of Europe from the first to the third crusade.

(From A.D. 1106. to A.D. 1189.)

WHILST the crusaders were earning barren laurels by their chivalrous exploits in Palestine, and wasting their strength in civil discord, the war of investitures continued to harass Germany, and threatened to burst forth in England. In vain several councils, faithful to the precepts of Hildebrand, and obedient to the commands of his successors, forbade ecclesiastics to receive benefices from princes, or temporal lords; in vain the popes declared that "it was impious that hands in which God was daily held*, should be polluted by being placed between hands soiled with blood and plunder†." The princes were not duped by such reasoning, and many of the prelates refused to support the extravagant pretensions of the Church. The emperor Henry IV. though still under the ban of excommunication, was supported in the war against his rebellious son by a great body of the German clergy, headed by the archbishop of Treves.

* According to the doctrine of transubstantiation.

† The form of giving an investiture, was for the suzerain to hold his vassal's hands in his own, and administer an oath of fealty.

William the Conqueror was openly opposed to the ambition of the pope ; his wrath was kindled by the refusal of the archbishop of Canterbury to consecrate those bishops who had received investiture from the king. With the usual pride of a Norman monarch, he wrote to the pope that unless such enormous claims were resigned, he would drive the troublesome Anselm from his dominions, and turn into his own treasury the ecclesiastical revenues that the Holy See derived from England. Pope Pascal II. was justly surprised at such firmness in a prince who owed his crown to the influence of Rome, but he was more eager to punish the emperor than the English monarch, and he engaged young Henry to rebel against his father Henry IV. Dethroned by his unnatural son, deprived of the common necessities of life, Henry IV., the most enlightened prince of his age, sunk under accumulated wrongs, (A.D. 1106), and his body, prohibited from burial for five years, became a monument of the endurance of papal vengeance, and of the inhumanity of the emperor Henry V. But divine vengeance seldom fails to overtake the guilty even in this life ; the parricide and the unnatural son have especially reason to fear retributive justice. Henry V. was soon involved in the consequences of his guilt, and the memory of his unhappy father was vindicated by the new wars between the papacy and the empire. Henry V. and the Pontiff, allies in crime, soon became bitter enemies ; their hostility was the expiation of their guilt, they were the authors of their own punishment.

When Henry V. saw his power confirmed by the death of his father, he could not endure that it should be limited by pretensions which necessarily appeared odious to a sovereign, though they had been the cause of his elevation. Blinded by the ambition of power, he had supported claims fatal to the imperial authority ; and he was not slow in resolving to undo the work of his hands. Pascal II. soon discovered the change ; he undertook a journey into France

to escape from the dangerous vicinity of Henry, whose obedience was now only to be measured by his fears or his interests. A conference took place between the pope and the imperial commissioners at Châlons, which was satisfactory to neither party (A.D. 1107). Pascal would yield nothing, and the ambassadors with more reason than moderation, broke off the treaty, declaring that the dispute could only be settled in Italy, and by the sword. The pope hastily summoned a council at Troyes, where he confirmed the decrees against investitures, and thus the death of Henry IV. had only rendered the contest more active.

Henry V. opposed diets to councils, and armies to anathemas. In the diet held at Ratisbon, (A.D. 1110), he declared his resolution of marching to Rome at the head of his army, and shewed by his active exertions that this was no idle menace. Early in the ensuing year, he appeared at the gates of Rome, and Pascal, who inherited the ambition but not the courage of Gregory VII., humbly besought peace. A treaty was concluded, by which the emperor tacitly abandoned the investitures, but was permitted to resume all the lands that had been added to the bishoprics since the days of Charlemagne. Had these articles been executed, the papacy would have come out victorious from defeat, and the empire would have gained nothing but a partial war with each prelate, whose property had been sacrificed by the pontiff. But Henry saw the snare, and obliged the pope to swear that he would procure the consent of every bishop to the act of resumption, which Pascal readily did, forgetting that spiritual obedience rarely triumphs over temporal interests.

After the ratification of the treaty, Henry went to the church, to receive the imperial crown; as soon as the ceremony was commenced, the pope urged his claim to the renunciation of investitures, and the service was interrupted by angry controversy. Henry retired into the sacristy to hear the resolution of the bishops; but these were so indig-

nant at the act of resumption, that they could not be kept within the bounds of moderation. They insisted that their right to their Sees was as valid as that of the pope to his tiara; they rushed into the Church, and overwhelmed the pontiff with reproaches, paying no regard to the texts of Scripture, recommending the abandonment of worldly treasure, which Pascal quoted as an excuse for his conduct. Finally, they declared that they would never consent to the treaty, whilst the pope on the other hand strenuously insisted on the investitures. This disgraceful scene lasted several hours, and there seemed no end to the scandalous tumult. The Germans exclaimed that the pope should be made to yield by force, for these brave warriors were disgusted by a dispute in which cupidity alone animated the successors of the apostles. At length the emperor ordered the pope to be arrested, and having encountered much personal danger, he cut to pieces the Romans who tried to rescue Pascal. Two cardinals headed the seditious citizens; such was their fury, that having seized Otho, count of Milan, who had lent his horse to the emperor, they tore him to pieces, and threw the mutilated fragments of his body to the dogs.

Imprisonment quickly abated Pascal's pride; the severity with which he was treated, taught him that Henry was not likely to be scrupulous in the use of means to effect his desires; terrified by the emperor's menaces, he offered to yield every thing that was required, and at the end of two months he surrendered the investitures to obtain his liberty. The pope on leaving his dungeon, excommunicated all who should in future attempt to weaken the imperial power, swore on the Gospels that he would never endeavour to limit it, and that he would not under any circumstances issue an anathema against Henry. When the bull containing these articles, had been duly signed by sixteen cardinals and prelates, Henry and Pascal returned to Rome; the ceremony of the coronation was completed, the pope and the

emperor communicated from the same host *, and the latter returned to Germany.

But the bishops throughout Europe disclaimed this treaty as a disgraceful sacrifice of the rights of the church. Several councils launched anathemas against Henry, and a solemn sentence of excommunication was pronounced in Pascal's presence. The countess Matilda's death, (A.D. 1115), supplied new motives of hostility; she had bequeathed her dominions to the Holy See, while the emperor claimed the inheritance as one of the fiefs of his crown. Henry marched once more to Rome; Pascal, abandoned by the citizens, whom he had incautiously offended, fled to the Norman princes in Southern Italy, where he died a miserable exile.

Gelasius II. was elected by the cardinals in the room of Pascal; but as he refused to confirm the treaty respecting investitures, Henry conferred the pontificate on Gregory VIII.; and thus civil war was added to the war of investitures. The two popes fought each other with all the weapons supplied by the spiritual armoury of the Church; they issued anathemas and excommunications, until at length Calixtus II. who had succeeded Gelasius, took Gregory prisoner, and, after loading him with insults, immured him in a cloister (A.D. 1121).

Though the papal thunders from their frequency were little regarded in Italy, they produced a formidable effect in Germany, which humbled the emperor in his turn. Wearied out by a war so long and apparently interminable, Henry, on learning that the Saxons, instigated by the archbishop of Mayence, were in arms, agreed that the matters in dispute should be finally arranged in a diet held at Worms. All parties were resolved on peace, but the papal legates were permitted to dictate the conditions. The superiority of the Holy See was distinctly recognized; bishops and

* The consecrated wafer, used in the Romish communion.

abbots were indeed to be elected in presence of the emperor, but this was declared to be a concession of especial favour. Investiture of the temporal fiefs, held by prelates, was to be given by the sceptre ; it was declared that the cross and ring, the sacred symbols of spiritual power, should not be profaned by the touch of princes.

These terms, subsequently sanctioned by the general council of Lateran, (A.D. 1123), put an end to the war of investitures, the longest, the most sanguinary and the most scandalous that had yet originated in ecclesiastical ambition. Every base passion was excited, every crime committed ; injustice, ambition and rebellion were invoked as allies by the ministers of a religion whose first lessons are disinterestedness, obedience and fidelity. To obtain an odious victory, the pontiffs hesitated not to employ the most criminal means, preaching sedition, and making a merit before God of neglect of the obligations he has imposed, and violation of the laws he has prescribed. Benedictions were bestowed on a son, whom the papal exhortations had led to violate the laws of nature, because his rebellion was deemed useful to the interests of the Holy See. Rome triumphed : it wrested from Henry V. the portion of spiritual jurisdiction so long held by his ancestors, and which he had sworn to preserve with the other rights of the crown when he ascended the throne. Absolved from ecclesiastical censures, but not from guilt, the unfortunate prince could not hush the voice of conscience, nor hide from himself the disgrace of being forced personally to undergo the humiliation, whose courageous refusal he had punished by parricide.

While Robert of Normandy was engaged in the crusades, his brother Henry had usurped the throne of England and secured its possession by his prudent administration. Robert soon disgusted his followers and was deprived even of the duchy of Normandy, the ancient possession of his family. He was forced to surrender to his brother, who cruelly kept him in prison during the remainder of his life.

France had been long a prey to anarchy, but the abilities of Louis VI. gradually led to the restoration of the royal authority. Learning was beginning to flourish, and the reputation of Abelard, equally celebrated for his abilities and his misfortunes, had brought crowds of students to the schools he established. On the death of Henry I. the crown of England was usurped by Stephen count of Blois, in defiance of the right of the empress Matilda, daughter of the deceased monarch. The civil war occasioned by this usurpation was terminated by a judicious treaty, which gave the crown to Stephen, but secured the succession to Henry II. the son of Matilda. But the events that occurred in France and England were scarcely regarded, while the attention of Christendom was fixed on the new commotions that rent the papacy and the empire.

Henry V. did not long survive the disgraceful termination of the war of investitures. He died childless, (A.D. 1125.) and the crown was claimed by his two nephews, the dukes of Suabia and Franconia. The archbishop of Mayence, by his influence over the lower ranks of the nobility, procured the election of Lothaire, the enemy of the late imperial family, whilst the young princes of Hohenstauffen * in vain asserted their rights; though supported by a large party of the superior nobility, they were overwhelmed by ecclesiastical censures and the arms of the empire, and the throne was secured to the prince chosen by the church. One of the first proofs that Lothaire gave of his gratitude and religious zeal, was bestowing his daughter and the investiture of the duchy of Saxony on Guelph duke

* The imperial family of the Hohenstauffen, are also called the Ghibelins, and give their name to the party that maintained the royal authority against papal usurpation during the Middle Ages. The family of the Guelphs or Welfs, dukes of Bavaria, were the supporters of the popes, and their name was adopted by the papal faction. See also page 354.

of Bavaria, the chief of the Guelph family, and the most ardent partisan of the popes.

Honorius II. succeeded Calixtus in the chair of St. Peter; he owed his election to a faction, and he assumed the triple crown without waiting for the sanction of the emperor. But though the pope thus unceremoniously set aside the authority of the sovereign, he was by no means slow in asserting his own real or pretended claims. Roger count of Sicily had taken possession of his nephew's inheritance, the duchies of Apulia and Calabria, without asking for the pope's approbation or waiting for his sanction; he subsequently offered to purchase the investiture, but Honorius, yielding only to the dictates of rage, levied an army, and joining the prince of Capua, marched against the count of Sicily as a refractory vassal. Roger, who was a skilful general and able statesman, soon forced the prince of Capua to retreat and the pope to negotiate. He was confirmed in his possessions on rendering homage, and was presented with a consecrated banner as a formal investiture of the duchy of Apulia.

The death of Honorius (A.D. 1130.) occurred at a time when Rome and the Church were distracted by the pretensions of rival factions. One of these surreptitiously elected an old monk, who took the name of Innocent II.; the rest with more formality chose the grandson of a converted Jew under the title of Anacletus II. Civil war, aggravated by religious hatred, followed; the rival popes sent out legates in every direction, soliciting princes to espouse their cause; the streets of Rome flowed with the blood of its citizens, and the ruined temples of ancient paganism became the fortresses or the asylums of Christian pastors. Roger married the sister of Anacletus, and obtained from the pontiff the title of King of the Two Sicilies together with the investiture of several of the Norman principalities; in return he levied an army and forced Innocent to seek refuge in France.

But Innocent found in his exile a supporter who though possessing neither wealth, rank nor power, was a more valuable ally than the most potent monarch. It is a signal proof of the great advance of civilization and of the triumph of mind over brute force that St. Bernard, a monk of feeble constitution and retired habits, became, by the mere force of his talents and eloquence, in some degree the arbiter of the destinies of Europe.

St. Bernard was educated by a pious mother in the practice of those austerities which in the dark ages were supposed to be the essence of devotion. At an early age he embraced a monastic life, and several of his nearest relatives influenced by his eloquence followed his example. He entered the convent of Citeaux in the twenty-second year of his age, (A.D. 1113.) whose rigid rules had hitherto deterred men from its community. But such numbers offered themselves, attracted by the fame of Bernard, that it became necessary to found several new convents, of which the most celebrated was that of Clairvaux * in a sequestered rugged valley of Burgundy, over which Bernard himself presided as abbot. The fame of the young abbot's wisdom was diffused through Christendom; princes and nobles sought his counsel personally or by letter, and his recommendations were received as the dictates of inspiration.

Louis the Fat, though inclined to support the cause of Anacletus, summoned a council to decide between the rival popes. It was unanimously resolved to refer the question to St. Bernard, who declaring in favour of Innocent, Louis immediately hastened to meet the exiled pope on the banks of the Loire and receive him with the respect due to the legitimate successor of St. Peter. Henry I. of England, and the monarchs of the Spanish provinces, espoused the

* From its savage appearance it was originally called the Valley of Wormwood (*Vallis absinthialis*), but when it was tenanted by pious men the name was changed to the Bright Valley (*Clara Vallis*).

same cause, and the emperor Lothaire was thus encouraged to lead Innocent back to Rome. The war however continued to rage for several years, but at length on the death of Anacletus, (A.D. 1138.) the antipope chosen as his successor yielded to the persuasions of St. Bernard and laid down the ensigns of his dignity at the feet of Innocent. Roger king of Sicily remained still unsubdued, and Innocent marched against him in person. But the pope was no match for such a renowned warrior, he fell into an ambuscade and was taken prisoner. Profiting by this advantage, Roger procured a renewal of the grant of his kingdom, and thenceforward treated Innocent with so much deference that he was taken into high favour at the papal court.

While Innocent was strenuously exerting himself to extend the power of the Holy See, he was alarmed by the effects produced by the preaching of Arnold of Brescia, a pupil of the celebrated Abelard. Arnold had diligently studied the Holy Scriptures and the early history of the church under his excellent preceptor; he returned home fully convinced that Christianity had been sadly changed from its original purity, and that the honour of God and the good of man could be best promoted by compelling the prelates to abandon their temporal power, and to return to the example of Jesus and his apostles. The manly eloquence, the dauntless zeal, of this bold reformer procured him a crowd of auditors. The whole power of the Church and the influence of St. Bernard were exerted to silence his accusing voice; he was at length forced to fly from Italy and seek refuge in Switzerland, but though still pursued by the vindictive malice of his persecutors, he ceased not to assail the usurpations of the Holy See, and to defend the sacred liberty of conscience. The Roman people at length, roused by his exhortations, restored the shadow of the ancient republic, and Innocent, mortified at being deprived of his temporal power, died of a broken heart. Celestine II. Lucius II. and Stephen III. successively assumed the tiara

and held it but for a very brief space, but at length St. Bernard had the satisfaction of seeing one of his own monks and pupils ascend the papal throne.

In the mean time Conrad duke of Franconia had become emperor of Germany* and conquered his rivals the Guelphs † ; but while thus engaged he was unable to attend to the affairs of Italy, and the peninsula was left a prey to the contests between the partisans of the pope and the followers of Arnold. Religion was indeed at this time the cause or the pretext for wars in every part of the continent ; Louis VII. surnamed the Young, though an easy tempered devotee was very jealous of his royal rights. The chapter of Bourges having elected an archbishop disagreeable to the court, he commanded them to choose another, but pope Innocent without any delay consecrated the obnoxious prelate, and when Louis refused to receive him, laid the kingdom under an interdict. Theobald count of Champagne and St. Bernard joined the pope from very different motives ; the for-

* Properly speaking, he was only king of the Romans until he received the imperial crown at Rome from the pope, but we prefer calling him emperor, as he is best known by that title in history.

† Two incidents render the siege of Weisberg which occurred during this war worthy of notice. Guelph duke of Bavaria, who was besieged in the castle, resolving to make a sally, gave his name as the watchword. This having been discovered by the emperor's brother, he gave as the word to the imperial army Ghibelin, the name of a village in Suabia where he had been educated, and this was the origin of these celebrated party designations. When Weisberg was forced to surrender, the duchess appealed to the generosity of Conrad for permission to quit the castle in safety with the other women, and that they might take with them as much as each could carry. The emperor complied, and when the gates were thrown open in the presence of the entire army, great was the astonishment of the besiegers to see the duchess and the other noble ladies staggering under the weight of their husbands who had offended the emperor. Conrad was so much moved by this example of conjugal fidelity, that he entered into an accommodation with Guelph, and had no reason subsequently to repent his lenity.

mer was an ambitious hypocrite, who hoped to aggrandize himself at the expense of the royal authority, the latter was persuaded that the interests of religion could be best maintained by supporting the power of the church. But the young king's violent temper was his worst enemy ; having stormed Vitri, a town belonging to the count of Champagne, some of the inhabitants who had sought refuge in a church continuing to defend themselves, he gave orders that the building should be set on fire, and thirteen hundred individuals perished in the flames. The king was seized with remorse, and bitterly repenting of his hasty cruelty, he eagerly sought reconciliation with the Holy See. His repentance was as excessive as his passion, he not only submitted to receive the archbishop favoured by the pope, but he humbled himself before Bernard, promised to join in a second crusade, and in spite of the remonstrances of the Abbè Suger, who possessed the piety of Bernard without his fanaticism, commenced preparations for the expedition. Thus, an act of cruelty gave birth to an act of folly, and myriads of Franks were sacrificed in a distant land, to expiate both.

Eugenius III. driven from Italy by the partisans of Arnold, sought refuge in France. He had just received from the east intelligence of the fall of Edessa, and of the danger that threatened Jerusalem ; he was therefore eager to have the Christian kingdom rescued before assistance would be too late. The remorse of Louis and the enthusiasm of Bernard revived the spirit of enthusiasm which had been so fatally developed fifty years before. At a general assembly of the Franks, held on the plains of Vezelay, (A. D. 1146), the eloquence of the abbot of Clairvaux proved as effectual as that of Peter the Hermit, and the French chivalry sought crosses with such avidity, that Bernard was obliged to tear his robes, in order to supply these symbols of engagement to the ardent volunteers.

From France, Bernard proceeded to Germany, performing numberless miracles, according to the belief of his superstitious followers, but working, as he said himself, "a miracle of miracles," when he persuaded the emperor Conrad to become a crusader. But the ardent missionary addressed himself not merely to the princes and nobles, he took every opportunity of preaching to the populace in the cities through which he passed, and undesignedly roused a spirit of fanaticism, which, as on a former occasion, first vented itself on the wretched Jews *. Bernard honourably exerted himself to save the unfortunate victims, and the emperor Conrad gave them shelter in the imperial cities, but multitudes were sacrificed by the fanatics, and Bernard's popularity was endangered by his charity, while the persecutor, a priest named Rudolph, was exalted as a saint.

* This persecution is very affectingly described in the Chronicles of Rabbi Joseph. We shall extract a portion of his narrative. "That year was also unto the house of Jacob a time of sorrow and oppression, of emptiness, desolation, and destruction, and of smiting of the knees together; and much pain was in all loins, and their faces gathered blackness; for the priest Rudolph came unto the land of Ashkenaz, (Germany,) to search out, and to mark with the warp and the woof, (the sign of the cross) those which would join themselves to go unto Jerusalem. And he spake falsehood against the Jews, the remnant which was left from the first persecutions, and he thought in his heart 'It is time to act against this people, to dissolve, to kill, and to destroy them.' And he went along crying in the name of his God, in order to stir up people to go unto Jerusalem. And in all places he passed through, he stirred up the dogs (the rabble) in them, saying, "Avenge ye our Lord's vengeance on his enemies who are before us: after that we shall go." And when the Jews heard it, their heart melted away; trembling took hold upon them, pain as of a woman in travail. And their spirit rose not in them before the rage of the oppressor, who was ready to destroy. And they cried unto the Lord, and said, 'Alas, O Lord! behold fifty years, like the years of a jubilee, have not passed by, since our blood was spilt like water, because of the sanctification of Thy great, mighty, and fearful name, in the day of the great slaughter. If Thou forsake us for ever, what wilt Thou

To prevent disputes arising from national jealousy, it had been arranged that the German crusades should precede the French. Conrad assembled his army early in spring, and found that he could muster seventy thousand gallant cavaliers, independent of light horsemen and infantry. The march through Hungary was performed without any difficulty, but when they entered the Byzantine territories, the jealousy of the emperor Manuel and his subjects involved them in serious embarrassments. After much loss of life, in some degree provoked by the violence of the crusaders, the Germans encamped under the walls of Constantinople, from whence they were transported into Asia, after having completely alienated the affections of the Greeks. Two months afterwards, king Louis, attended by the flower of his nobility, marched by the same route, and were treated with more kindness, or rather, less hostility than their predecessors. Their delay in the suburbs of Constantinople soon, however, roused suspicions that led to angry controversies; indeed, several of the French nobles urged their monarch to unite with Roger king of Sicily, and seize Constantinople before advancing into Asia. This danger was averted by the craft of Manuel, whose emissaries spread false and exaggerated reports of the fame and wealth that the Germans were acquiring, and thus roused the emulation of the French, who eagerly besought their monarch to lead them to the field.

The French had scarcely reached the lake of Nicæa,

do for Thy great name? Wilt Thou appoint misery a second time?" But in England the Lord delivered them by the hand of King Henry; for the heart of kings is in the hand of the Lord, and he put it in his heart to deliver them; and he took not from them, from a thread even to a shoe-latchet; may the name of the Lord be blessed for ever! Amen."

Hebrew Chronicles. Vol. i. 126, &c.

We shall soon see the English nation emulating the fanaticism of France and Germany.

when they learned the utter overthrow of the German army, a calamity partly occasioned by their own imprudence, and partly by the treachery of the Greeks. They had been surrounded by the Turks in a valley near Dorylœum, where the first crusaders had won so glorious a victory over Kilij Arslan ; utterly ignorant of the country, and deserted by their guides, they resolved to force their way to the sea. A general panic prevailed ; every pass was pre-occupied by the active Turks : more than nine-tenths perished by the Turkish arrows, and the rest, assailed in their hour of distress by the treacherous Greeks, were rescued only by the prompt advance of a French detachment.

The French, warned by the misfortunes of their allies, pursued their march along the sea-coast, advancing slowly and with difficulty through a country intersected with rivers and ravines. They first encountered serious resistance in passing the Meander, but they soon forced the Turks to fly. On this occasion they received an undoubted proof of the treachery of the Greeks, for the Mohammedan fugitives were received into the city of Antioch, on the Mæander* ; while the crusaders were not only excluded from every Greek garrison, but even refused a supply of provisions. Their course now led them over the mountain range, south of Laodicea, and information was received that they would be attacked by the united forces of the Turks and the Greeks. Louis took every precaution to prevent a surprise ; but the imprudence of the generals who led the van, engaged the army in the toilsome ascent of a steep mountain, at the close of a weary march. In this disadvantageous position they were assailed by the Turks ; the king himself was exposed to great personal danger, and deemed himself happy in escaping with the loss of a great part of his baggage, and thousands of his bravest followers.

At Satalia an agreement was entered into with the

* This must not be confounded with Antioch in northern Syria.

Greeks for conveying the crusaders to Syria by sea. Scarcely was the treaty concluded when it was flagrantly violated. The pilgrims who were left behind when the first division sailed, after having been subjected to every species of extortion and cruelty, endeavoured to make their way to Tarsus, but they were betrayed by their perfidious guides, and either slain or made captives by the Turkish hordes. The prisoners were treated with great humanity by the conquerors, and the generosity of the Mohammedans to these misguided men was a bright contrast to the cruelty and perfidy they experienced from their Christian brethren.

Louis was received with an earnest welcome in Antioch. Raymond its prince was uncle to the French queen Eleanor, and he hoped, through her influence, to obtain the aid of the crusading army, in extending his dominions. But Louis could not be diverted from the main objects of the expedition to gratify private friendship, and Raymond, in revenge, successfully exerted himself to alienate Eleanor's affections from her husband.

Baldwin III. king of Jerusalem, invited his allies to visit the Holy city, and determine upon some enterprise which might be executed by their united forces. After much controversy, it was agreed to undertake the siege of Damascus, the ancient capital of Northern Syria. The crusaders marched on this expedition in the burning month of July; but notwithstanding all the disadvantages of the season, their want of resources, and the strength of the hostile walls, they would have succeeded, had not dissension and treachery appeared in their own camp. Worn down by fatigue, betrayed by their Syrian allies, and heartily hating each other, the Christian soldiers retreated in great disorder, and suffered severely in their flight, from the incessant attacks of the light Turkish troops (A.D. 1148). It was now evident that the Christians of Palestine neither could nor would be saved by their brethren of Europe, and

the princes who had led the crusade, returned home in disgust.

This disgraceful termination of an expedition from which so much had been expected, created a melancholy feeling of surprise in Europe. St. Bernard was regarded by many as a lying prophet, who, by pretended inspiration and false miracles, had lured myriads to a miserable doom. But the abbot of Clairvaux did not yield to the storm; he replied to the reproaches poured upon him, by pointing out the true causes of the failure, the follies and vices of the crusaders themselves; and he asserted, that another expedition, undertaken and conducted in a spirit of piety, would certainly be successful. The abbot Suger, who had opposed the crusade originally, and governed France with consummate wisdom during the absence of its monarch, enraged at the disgrace which had been brought upon Christendom, zealously adopted the views of Bernard, but their joint efforts to revive the crusading spirit were unavailing, and they were surprised by death in the midst of their abortive exertions.

After the departure of the crusaders, Baldwin III. for several years maintained the integrity of the kingdom of Jerusalem, but on his death (A. D. 1162.) the crown devolved on his brother, the feeble Amalric, whose military merits were a poor compensation for his profligate manners. In the beginning of his reign, he became entangled in the complicated politics of Egypt, where the Fatimite Khaliphs, like their rivals of Bagdad, had sunk under the sway of their Turkish prime ministers, who assumed the title of Sultan, and acted as independent sovereigns. Núr-ed-dín, prince of Mosul, had gradually become the chief of the Turkish princes: he had added Damascus, with northern Syria and the principality of Edessa, to his dominions, and he was daily gaining advantages over the prince of Antioch. A civil war in Egypt, between Shawer and Dargam, slaves contending for the dominions of their master, afforded Nur-

ed-di'n an opportunity of extending his influence which he was not slow in embracing. He sent his general Shi'rkú to the aid of Shawer, and when that adventurer triumphed, Nu'r-ed-di'n's army, instead of returning home, took possession of the town of Belbeis, and scarcely concealed their intention of seizing the entire country. Shi'rkú was accompanied by his nephew Joseph, surnamed Saleh-ed-di'n*, better known to European readers by the name of Saladin. The uncle and nephew were warriors of the ferocious race of the Kurds, who had entered into the service of the Sultan of Bagdad, whence they passed into the army of the prince of Mosul. Both were distinguished by their military prowess; but the learning of Saladin was as remarkable as his valour, and he was universally respected for wisdom as well as courage. Shawer soon became jealous of his auxiliaries, and entered into alliance with Amalric to drive Shi'rkú from Egypt. The Christians delivered Shawer, but soon attempted to seize Egypt for themselves. The Sultan once more applied to Nu'r-ed-di'n, and once more Shi'rkú and Saladin marched to his aid. Shawer, whose fate it was to find enemies in his allies, was treacherously seized by Saladin, who thus opened to his uncle the path to the chief power in Egypt. Shi'rkú did not survive his elevation more than two months; he was succeeded by Saladin, who thus at an early age became possessed of the chief power of the east. These revolutions were fatal to the power of the Christians in Palestine; they must have sunk instantly had not Nu'r-ed-di'n entertained a just jealousy of the ambition of Saladin. But they were too blind to their own condition to perceive the great change in the circumstances of their enemy; madly bent on the conquest of Egypt, they laid siege to Damietta, aided by a Greek fleet and army, but they were soon forced to abandon the enterprize and to retreat with great loss. Thenceforth Saladin ceased to act

* "The salvation of religion."

on the defensive, but crossing the frontiers of Palestine, captured several fortresses which secured him a passage for the future invasion of the country. The death of Nu'r-ed-di'n (A. D. 1173), greatly strengthened his power, while that of the Christians was weakened in the same year by the death of Amalric, who was succeeded by his son Baldwin IV. a youth only thirteen years old.

The desultory wars between Saladin and the Christians, were disastrous to the latter; victory was scarcely less injurious to them than defeat, for they had no means of recruiting their forces. Baldwin IV. as he grew up became the victim of a loathsome and incurable disease, the regency was sought by candidates whose only qualification was turbulent ambition. To check the disorders occasioned by his own weakness, Baldwin bestowed the hand of his sister Sibylla, on Guy of Lusignan, a warrior of undoubted valour, but destitute of every other quality required in the ruler of a troubled kingdom. The death of Baldwin added the evils of a disputed succession to the other calamities of Palestine, and though Guy was finally acknowledged king through the influence of his wife, he found that he was destitute of any real authority.

At this time, when peace was more than ever necessary to the Christians, Raynald of Chatillon, one of the adventurers who had come to the Holy Land for the sake of plunder, invaded the Moslem territories during a time of truce, a crime which the rulers of Palestine were unable or unwilling to punish.

Saladin, now at peace with all his Moslem neighbours, was not slow in exacting vengeance for this perfidy. He levied a numerous army and laid siege to Tiberius, a city in the dominions of the count of Tripolis. Guy hastily marched against the enemy, and in an evil hour, yielding to the suggestions of the master of the Temple, though opposed to the advice of his more prudent companions, hazarded a decisive engagement. It was fatal to the Christ-

ians, the king, Raynald of Chatillon, and the greater part of the Latin chivalry, remained prisoners; a few only, guided by count Raymond of Tripolis, cut their way through a Turkish division, and escaped to Tyre. The true cross, which had been brought into the field to encourage the soldiers, remained in the hands of the infidels. Saladin slew the perfidious Raynald, the original cause of this calamity, with his own hand, and ordered all the Templars and Hospitallers who would not abjure their faith, to be put to death, but he treated the rest of the captives with great kindness, especially the unfortunate king, whose misfortunes he sincerely pitied. The strength of the Christians was now so broken, that Saladin ventured to undertake the siege of Jerusalem *. Crowds of Mohammedans flocked to his camp, in order to aid in the recovery of the Holy City; and the Christian garrison, after a brief but brave resistance, was forced to surrender on equitable conditions. On the 2nd of October (A.D. 1187), Saladin entered the gates in triumph, and the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem was no more. Saladin treated his prisoners with more than ordinary clemency: he not only liberated several without ransom, but gave them money to defray the expences of their journey home. The same generosity was displayed by the other Mohammedans, but when the unfortunate pilgrims reached the territories of their Christian brethren, they experienced a sad change; they were plundered of the little property that the generous sultan had permitted them to retain, and left to perish by famine.

* He hesitated for some time about undertaking this important siege, but his wavering resolutions were confirmed by a short letter in verse, sent to him from a Moslem captive in the Holy City. It may be thus translated:—

Before thee, prince! the idol banners fall,
Our holy mosques are freed from impious thrall;
Shall I, the holiest, Islám's noblest shrine,
Defil'd by dogs, a helpless captive pine?

Whilst the kingdom, which had been purchased by the best blood of Christendom, was thus lost, almost without a struggle, the monarchs of western Europe, engrossed by their own concerns, had little leisure to attend to the affairs of Palestine. The emperor Conrad did not long survive the brave companions whose bones he had left to bleach on the plains of Syria. As if to expiate the evils he had brought on Germany, he bequeathed his dominions to his nephew instead of his son, believing that the abilities of Frederic, surnamed Barbarossa, from his red beard, could alone remedy the disasters of the crusade. The diet of Frankfort (A. D. 1152), adopted the same views, and readily accepted a sovereign, who being connected with both the great rival families of the Guelphs and Ghibelins, was the fittest to secure public tranquillity. But the crown and title of emperor could only be procured in Rome, and Frederic resolved on leading an army into Italy, which was more than ever the prey of factions and civil war. Arnold of Brescia, an enthusiast, who mistook memory for hope, had revived the old forms of the republic in Rome, and substituted the government of a senate for the rule of a pope. Eugenius III. who held the pontifical chair, offered the imperial crown to Frederic on the condition of his destroying the liberty, or rather the mockery of liberty, which Arnold had established in Rome; and the offer was accepted the more readily, as Frederic had learned that Manuel Comnenus was labouring to re-establish the Byzantine power in Italy. Scarcely however had the pope and the German emperor united against the Greek emperor, when their harmony was interrupted by the old dispute of investitures. Excommunications were prepared on one side, and armies assembled on the other; but the death of Eugenius (A.D. 1158) adjourned the struggle.

Anastasius IV. held the papal throne only a few months. He was succeeded by Adrian IV. an Englishman by birth, who began his reign by the unprecedented step of placing

the city of Rome under an interdict. Arnold of Brescia, after an ineffectual struggle, was forced to fly ; he was seized by a detachment of the German army, and Frederic, who hated him as a republican, delivered him up to papal vengeance. In the city where he had reigned by the mere force of his eloquence, Arnold was burned alive as a heretic and a traitor. The despicable Romans, as if roused by the sight of the pile that consumed their defender, took up arms to preserve as relics the ashes of one whom they had not courage to deliver.

Rescued from one danger, the pope feared that he was about to encounter a greater, when he learned that Frederic was marching towards Rome. Having received however assurances of good faith, he went to visit the German sovereign, and insisted on Frederic's holding the stirrup of his horse while he dismounted. The ceremony of the coronation having been performed, the emperor quitted Rome, whose pestilential vicinity was gradually destroying his army, and the pope at the same time deemed it prudent to abandon a city which was left at the mercy of a turbulent populace.

Immediately after his return from Palestine, Louis divorced the faithless Eleanor ; she gave her hand to Henry duke of Normandy, who obtained by this marriage a third part of France, just before the death of Stephen gave him possession of the English throne. Not content with such extended dominions, he resolved to undertake the conquest of Ireland, and solicited Adrian to sanction his expedition, which he asserted was chiefly designed to restore the purity of Christianity in that island. The pope readily issued a bull, bestowing upon Henry the lordship of Ireland, (A.D. 1156), and sent him an emerald ring as a symbol of investiture. It was not however until some years after that the British monarch found an opportunity of fulfilling his designs.

But while Adrian saw the papal bulls received with respect and obedience in most parts of Europe, he had the

mortification to find Italy disobedient and intractable. The Milanese openly despised his authority, and invited the Lombard cities to form a league for mutual defence against both the pope and the emperor. William the Bad, king of Sicily, undaunted by excommunications, defeated the forces of the pope and his allies, and having won absolution by the sword, obtained in addition the investiture not only of his hereditary dominions but of his recent conquests.

This treaty, by which the pope abandoned his allies, gave great offence to the emperor Frederic, and an insulting message from Adrian increased his indignation. At the head of a formidable army he entered Italy, and though he feigned to be appeased by the pope's excuses, he did not cease to assert his imperial supremacy over the ecclesiastical power, and over the spirit of freedom which had been rapidly acquiring strength in the Lombard cities. Milan, after a brave resistance, was taken, it was razed to the ground, and the plough passed over its ruins.

The death of Adrian (A.D. 1159) produced a schism in the church. Alexander III. and Victor III., elected by opposite parties, vilified, excommunicated, and made war upon each other. The former was supported by the kings of France and England, the latter was acknowledged by the emperor of Germany. Alexander naturally became the patron of liberty in Italy, where his rival appeared only as the supporter of imperial despotism. The free cities entered into a solemn league for their mutual defence (A.D. 1167), and the Lombard confederation soon made Frederic feel that the love of liberty was a more formidable foe to his despotism, than all the terrors of the church.

But even while the struggle between Alexander and the several anti-popes set up by Frederic was doubtful, that haughty prelate evinced a determination to maintain the spiritual despotism of Rome to its fullest extent. The king of England had raised Thomas à Becket to the highest dignities in his kingdom, and finally procured for him the

see of Canterbury, trusting by his means to establish the supremacy of the royal over the ecclesiastical power. But Becket not only refused to aid his benefactor in such an enterprize, but became the most strenuous supporter of ecclesiastical independence. After having flagrantly outraged the royal authority, he was condemned in a parliament held at Northampton to the forfeiture of all his goods, but he set the sentence at defiance, and appealed from his sovereign to the pope. Alexander not only approved of Becket's conduct, but actually named him his legate to England. The jealousies between Louis and Henry having produced a war, Becket met an honourable reception in France, where he launched forth anathemas against all the English bishops who had remained faithful to Henry, but especially the archbishop of York, who had crowned that monarch's son. Henry, attacked on all sides by discontented subjects, who gladly made Becket's cause a pretext for revolt, was after a long struggle forced to yield to his ungrateful subject, and Becket returned to England in triumph. Exile had not abated his haughtiness, he renewed his opposition to the royal authority with more vehemence than ever, and filled the entire kingdom with confusion. Becket was of Saxon descent; from the time of the Conquest, the Normans had been accustomed to regard the Saxons as an inferior race, little better than slaves, and they were therefore more indignant at the prelate's arrogance, even than their sovereign. Henry, while engaged in Normandy, could not restrain his indignation on hearing of Becket's continued usurpations; some of his attendants, animated by the words that escaped him in the heat of passion, resolved to deliver their sovereign from his enemy. They hastened to England, sought out the archbishop, and murdered him before the altar (A.D. 1170). Never was a crime more uselessly committed; Thomas à Becket was canonized as a saint, and Henry had more reason to fear his memory, than his living hostility.

In the same year, an exiled Irish prince invited the Normans to invade his country. Henry, involved in a war with France, and harassed by revolts in his continental dominions, could not immediately aid the fugitive Dermot, but he gave him permission to seek assistance from some of the Norman barons, whose settlement in England had not destroyed their love of adventure. Richard, earl of Chepstow, surnamed Strongbow, willingly engaged in the expedition, and so great was his success, that Henry had reason to fear the establishment of Strongbow as an independent monarch. To prevent such a result, Henry visited Ireland in person (A.D. 1172), and received the homage of the greater part of the petty sovereigns, who shared the country between them. He would probably have completed the conquest of the island, and prevented much of the misery produced by its imperfect subjugation, had he not been forced to return to England, where his authority was menaced by new and formidable dangers.

The success of the Lombard league against the emperor Frederic, had secured Pope Alexander's power in Italy; and confident in his strength, he summoned the English monarch to render an account of the murder of Becket. Henry at first resisted; but his queen, who deemed that she was not treated with the respect deserved by the valuable dowry she had brought, had instigated her sons to rebel against their father, and in that age of superstition and ignorance, he saw that he could not hope for success if the rebels fought under the sanction of religion. He submitted to all the papal demands, promising to support two hundred knights for the defence of Palestine, to take the cross in person, to restore its ancient domains to the see of Canterbury, and not to impede appeals from the English ecclesiastical courts to Rome. He even submitted to be whipped by monks before the tomb of Becket, to expiate his involuntary share in the archbishop's murder. The remainder of Henry's reign was spent in constant struggles

with his unnatural sons, who were urged to rebel against their father by the ambitious Eleanor, and to war against each other by their own unruly passions. Their misconduct brought down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave (A.D. 1189), and he was succeeded by his son Richard, whose deeds of bravery have made too many forget that he was a bad son, a tyrannical monarch, and a merciless conqueror.

Louis VII. might well console himself for the repeated defeats he received from Henry, by reflecting on the shining abilities of his son Philip, subsequently surnamed Augustus. He permitted him to be crowned during his life-time, and being soon after struck with mortal disease, he yielded to the stroke of death, with full confidence that his successor would maintain the ancient glory of France.

But before Louis and Henry had descended to the tomb, pope Alexander had completely triumphed over Frederic, and compelled the emperor not only to hold his stirrup, but to lead his horse by the bridle. The city of Venice, which had steadily supported the cause of Alexander, was the scene of Frederic's degradation. In order to recompense the fidelity of the Venetians, and at the same time to perpetuate the memory of his triumph, the pope instituted an annual ceremony by which the sovereignty of the Adriatic Sea was conferred on the Venetian republic. In a public assembly, he presented a ring to the Doge of Venice, saying, "Receive this ring as an emblem of sovereignty over the sea; you and your successors shall annually espouse the Adriatic, that posterity may know the sea to be yours by right of conquest, and that it owes the same submission to your republic that a wife does to her husband."

After the peace between the pope and the emperor had been ratified, a general council was summoned to regulate the affairs of the church. It met at the Lateran, for Rome had now returned to obedience (A.D. 1179), and enacted some useful laws for the better maintenance of ecclesiastical

discipline. But it is unfortunately more memorable for having excommunicated the Albigenses, and granted to those who took up arms against heretics the same indulgences as to those who visited the Holy Sepulchre.

The religious opinions of the Albigenses have been the subject of frequent controversy ; it is sufficient to say, that they were opposed to the doctrines of the church of Rome, and therefore cruelly persecuted. Cardinal d'Albano, abbot of Clarivaux, had the unenviable distinction of leading the first crusade against the Albigenses (A.D. 1181), which, though not so sanguinary as the subsequent wars against this unfortunate people, was equally remarkable for the savage ferocity of the ecclesiastical persecutors.

Pope Alexander died soon after his complete re-establishment of the pontifical power ; he was succeeded by Lucius IV. who, after a brief reign, made way for Urban III. The emperor Frederic was still the object of papal jealousy ; he procured for his son Henry the hand of the heiress to the king of Sicily, at which Urban was so offended and alarmed, that he was about to commence again the war of excommunications, when his death (A.D. 1187) prevented the interruption of public tranquillity, and the news of the loss of Jerusalem directed the attention of the arms of Christendom once more to the East.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Third Crusade, and its Results. The Persecution of the Albigenses.

(From A.D. 1189 to A.D. 1218.)

WHEN Philip Augustus ascended the throne of France (A.D. 1180), he found the king of England in possession of the best northern provinces, as duke of Normandy, and

the greater part of the country between the Rhone, the Loire, the Pyrenees, and the ocean, in right of his queen. Fortunately for Philip, the sons of Henry, by their frequent rebellions prevented the English monarch from consolidating his power. Richard, who became heir to the throne on the death of his brother Henry, entered into close alliance with Philip, under the pretence of having been deprived of his betrothed wife, the princess Alice of France, by the cautious jealousy or the illicit passion of his father. The pope, anxious to engage both in a new crusade, zealously exerted himself to restore peace between the rival sovereigns, and both consented to take the cross; but scarcely had they agreed to a truce, when Henry's sons were again induced to raise the standard of rebellion, and the English monarch, worn out by repeated vexations, died, as we have already stated, of a broken heart (A.D. 1189). Scarcely had he been laid in his grave, when the hollow friendship between Richard and Philip was abruptly terminated, and they began henceforth to regard each other with jealous hostility.

But while the kings of England and France, forgetful of their vows, had engaged in mutual war, the emperor Frederic was on his way to the Holy Land, with a gallant army of Germans. The march through Hungary was effected without much difficulty, and the hostility of the Servians and Bulgarians was easily overcome; but when the pilgrims entered the Greek empire, they found its sovereign obstinately determined to resist their passage. Isaac Angelus, who then ruled at Constantinople, was the dupe of a mad monk, named Dositheus, whom he had raised to the dignity of patriarch. This fanatic pretended to have learned by revelation that the efforts of the crusaders would be directed against the Greeks rather than the Turks, and thus induced Isaac to declare war against Frederic. The rapid progress of the German arms soon forced the Byzantine emperor to seek an accommodation; but the delay

he had occasioned, prevented the crusaders from entering Asia until the spring of the following year.

Early in March (A.D 1190), Frederic crossed the straits, and entered the Turkish territories with an army of eighty-two thousand fighting men. Their march, like that of their predecessors, was harassed by the incessant attacks of the Turkish light cavalry; famine compelled the knights to slaughter their horses for food; treacherous guides led them through dangerous passes beset by the enemy, and the faithless Greeks broke the treaty that had stipulated a supply for their wants. Still the gallant old emperor persevered; he defeated the Turks wherever they ventured to make a stand, and captured the city of Iconium. Unfortunately in the midst of its triumphs, the army of the crusaders was deprived of its chief; Frederic was unfortunately drowned in a little stream near the city of Seleucia, and his followers felt that with him their hopes of success had departed. Still the Germans advanced to Antioch, but when they had reached that city, a great number, forgetful of their vows, returned home; the remainder, under the duke of Suabia, joined the Christian army engaged in the siege of Acre.

The zeal for a crusade manifested itself in England, as it had done in other countries, by a fierce persecution of the Jews, who were massacred without mercy in York, in Norwich, and in London; but the prompt interference of the government put an end to these excesses. After many delays, the kings of France and England united their forces on the plains of Vezelay, and entered into a treaty, by which they mutually guaranteed the integrity of each other's dominions. The French marched to embark at Genoa, the English took the road to Marseilles; after encountering a perilous navigation, they again united their forces in the harbour of Messina. A quarrel between the English and the Sicilians, which led to the storming of the

city of Messina, was followed by the first burst of open animosity between Philip and Richard; the latter not only refused to marry the princess Alice, but made proposals to Berengaria, daughter of the duke of Navarre, to whom he was subsequently united. The payment of ten thousand marks of silver reconciled Philip to this insult. On the last day of March (A.D. 1191,) the French king sailed from Sicily, and in a fortnight joined the Christian army in Palestine.

Richard's fleet had a less prosperous voyage; it was dispersed by a storm, and part of it driven on the coast of Cyprus, then ruled by the usurper, Isaac Comnenus, an exile from Constantinople. With the usual perfidy of the Greeks, Isaac plundered the knights, whom the tempest had placed in his power; but their avenger was at hand. Richard arrived with the remainder of his fleet, and having effected a landing, easily defeated the Cypriotes. He did not relax from his exertions until he had rendered himself master of the island, the government of which he entrusted to two English knights, commanding them to supply his army with provision while it should be engaged in Palestine.

While Richard was thus occupied, the Christian army engaged in the siege of Ptolemais, or as it is now called, Acre, was in turn besieged by Saladin, who intercepted their convoys, cut off stragglers, and harassed the camp by incessant attacks. The arrival of the English king was therefore hailed with the utmost delight by the crusaders, a circumstance that by no means tended to allay the jealousy of his rival Philip. A fresh source of hostility between them arose from the rival claims of Conrad, marquis of Montferrat, and Guy de Lusignan, to the empty title of king of Jerusalem. Conrad was supported by the king of France, and by many whom his valour and wisdom had inspired with respect; Guy had on his side the Syrian barons, who dreaded Conrad's firmness, and Richard, who seems to have pitied his weakness. From the time of the

arrival of the English army, the siege of Acre was so vigorously prosecuted, that the town was soon forced to surrender; but this event was the signal for fresh discord, and Philip soon declared his determination of returning home.

Richard's romantic career in Palestine, his deeds of daring valour, and we reluctantly add, of atrocious cruelty, and the jealousy of his associates which rendered his victories fruitless, need not be recorded here; they left no trace behind them in the history of mankind; his exploits were admired and forgotten. After having wasted his efforts in vain, Richard having concluded peace with Saladin on terms more favourable than the Christians had a right to expect, quitted Palestine, where he had been engaged sixteen months, on his return to Europe.

The contrast between the conduct of the Christian and Mohammedan monarchs in this Crusade, is too striking to be passed over without notice. Saladin eagerly embraced every opportunity of showing courtesy to the Christian sovereigns; he was mild and merciful to his captives, never permitting the massacre of prisoners, except when driven to retaliation by the bigotry of the merciless crusaders; above all, he was strictly faithful to his engagements, and ready to exceed rather than fall short of his promises. Philip Augustus, on the other hand, was mean, treacherous and perfidious; ready to violate the most solemn agreements to gratify his paltry jealousy, or his sordid thirst for gain. English Richard was on the whole a more estimable character, but he has little pretensions to be regarded as a hero; he doubtless possessed great courage as a soldier, but he had no skill as a commander; he was a brutal conqueror, for he put his prisoners to death in cold blood, and sanctioned the most savage indignities to their lifeless bodies. His generosity has been sometimes lauded, but assuredly such an honourable name belongs not to the lavish profusion in which he indulged, merely to gratify his vanity. Finally,

he was the slave of unregulated passions, and was never diverted from any project, however wild or injurious, that his capricious temper suggested *.

Saladin died soon after the departure of the Crusaders, universally regretted by the Mohammedans of Asia, and even by his Christian subjects in Asia and Syria, to whom he had accorded the benefit of an enlightened toleration, which for many ages after was a blessing unknown in Europe †. Richard, after a harassing voyage, was shipwrecked between Venice and Aquileia: his route homewards lay through the territories of his enemy, the duke of Austria, whom, with his characteristic pride, he had grievously insulted in Palestine. Near Vienna he was betrayed by the imprudence of his servants, and was immediately thrown into prison. The emperor Henry, the unworthy son of Frederic Barbarossa, demanded the royal captive from his vassal, and having obtained possession of such a prisoner, tried how he might derive the utmost

* Richard has been generally accused by the continental writers, of having procured the murder of Conrad, marquis of Montferrat, when the crusaders had resolved to make him king of Jerusalem. Two assassins slew Conrad in the streets of Tyre; they were Ishmaelians, subject to "the old man of the mountain," and it is doubtful whether they were instigated by their own Grand Master, by king Richard, or by Saladin. The last supposition is untenable, not merely because Saladin's character is inconsistent with it, but because the event was injurious to the Sultan's interests, as it removed the cause of disunion in the Christian camp. Richard is accused, not only by the French and German, but also by the cotemporary Arabian historians; and the documents produced in his defence by the English historians, (pretended letters from the Sheikh al Jebel) are undoubtedly forgeries. Still we hesitate to accuse him directly of the crime, because the Chief of the Assassins had been insulted and injured by Conrad, and might therefore have taken vengeance on him without waiting for any suggestion from the king of England.

† Saladin's life having been recently published, it is unnecessary for us to collect here, the anecdotes illustrating his many virtues that are to be found in the oriental historians.

advantages from him in the shape of ransom. John, the unnatural brother of Richard, and Philip of France, made great offers to the emperor on the condition of his detaining the English monarch in person for the remainder of his life; on the other hand, deputies from England proffered large sums for the deliverance of a monarch, whom the fame of his exploits had rendered popular. After much disgraceful chaffering on the part of the emperor, the terms of Richard's ransom were arranged, he was set at liberty, and on the 13th of March (A.D. 1194,) landed in England.

Philip and John had entered into an alliance, by which the latter had agreed to betray Normandy to the French king, on condition of being secured in the rest of his brother's dominions; but the news of Richard's liberation alarmed John, he resolved to purchase pardon by a new act of treachery, and he massacred the French garrison of the city of Evreux, which had been entrusted to him by his ally. Richard did not refuse his brother forgiveness, but he never confided to him any important command; he was more eager to be revenged on Philip, but the war between these rival monarchs was confined to desultory skirmishes that produced no permanent result. At length Richard, while besieging a petty castle belonging to one of his vassals, was severely wounded in the shoulder by an arrow. The unskilfulness of the surgeon, added to the monarch's intemperance, produced mortification, and Richard expired in the flower of his age, (A.D. 1199,) a victim to his capricious passions.

The accession of Innocent III. to the papacy, produced an important change in the political condition of Europe. Descended from an illustrious family, elected by an unusual favour in the very prime of life, enjoying the fame at once of great sanctity and extensive knowledge, he ascended the pontifical throne at a moment when every thing abroad and at home favoured his ambition. The Roman citizens, weary of their phantom of a republic, eagerly yielded them-

selves subjects to the pope ; their example was imitated in the other towns that were deemed part of the papal dominions, and the cities of Tuscany besought Innocent's patronage. The death of the emperor Henry VI. (A.D. 1197), who left behind him only one son, Frederic, a child but two years old, exposed Germany to the evils of a disputed succession, one party supporting Frederic, duke of Suabia, the other Otho, duke of Brunswick. Innocent, like his predecessors, was the bitter enemy of the family of Hohenstauffen, and he therefore zealously exerted himself in favour of Otho. He was supported by John, who had usurped the throne of England, in defiance of the rights of his nephew Arthur, the son of his elder brother Geoffrey. But Innocent found that excommunications were not such formidable weapons as they once had been ; Philip Augustus for some time braved the resentment of the pope, both by supporting the pretensions of the duke of Suabia, and discarding his queen ; but when he perceived that some of his vassals were seeking pretexts for revolt, he yielded the latter point, and consented to take back Ingelburga.

While Christendom was thus agitated, its attention was suddenly arrested by a new crusade, preached by Foulk, a fanatic priest of Nouilly, in France, and conducted by Baldwin, count of Flanders (A.D. 1202). Little interest was taken in this expedition by the Supreme Pontiff or the European sovereigns, and the conduct of the crusaders showed that religious zeal had ceased to be their predominant motive. Warned by the numerous calamities that had wasted the armies that had gone by land, they sought the means of transport by sea from the republic of Venice. The crusaders were unable to pay the sum demanded for their passage, but instead of money they offered to conquer for the Venetians the city of Zara, in Dalmatia. This offer was accepted, and in spite of the pope's urgent prohibitions, the first labour of these crusaders was the conquest of a Christian city. Having besought pardon for this deviation from

Innocent, they immediately proceeded to a new and more striking inconsistency. They resolved to restore Alexis Comnenus and his father Isaac to the throne of Constantinople for a stipulated sum, and leaving the Turks in quiet possession of Palestine, directed their efforts against the Greek empire. Isaac was easily restored by the aid of the Latins, but he found great difficulty in collecting the sum he had agreed to pay for their services. The crusaders in the mean time quartered themselves in the neighbourhood of Constantinople, where their insolence and their depredations rendered them at once feared and detested. Isaac died soon after his restoration, leaving to his son Alexis a throne equally in danger from his subjects and his allies.

The severe taxes imposed by Alexis, and the depredations of his Latin auxiliaries, so irritated the Greeks, that they revolted against the emperor, and raised to the throne his cousin Ducas, commonly called Mourzuffle, a name, which, in the vulgar dialect of Byzantium, described his heavy eye-brows. Mourzuffle, proclaimed emperor by the populace, strangled the unfortunate Alexis with his own hands, and made vigorous preparations for defence against the vengeance of the crusaders. But he was feebly supported by his subjects, and the capital of the Eastern empire was taken by storm. The Byzantines endured all the miseries that a licentious soldiery could inflict; all the crimes, to which rapine and lust could stimulate, were perpetrated by the crusaders. Many noble works of ancient art, and many precious manuscripts, were destroyed by the ignorant crusaders, most of whom professedly despised learning and science.

The victorious crusaders divided the Greek dominions between them; a fourth part was assigned to Baldwin, who had been elected emperor of Constantinople, the Venetians acquired Candia and the Morea, while several adventurous barons founded small principalities in Greece. Two Grecian princes established themselves in narrow territories

round Nice and Trebezond, dignifying their petty provinces with the title of empire ; a third maintained his independence in the mountains of Epirus. The Latins kept possession of Constantinople for nearly half a century, but it was finally wrested from them, and the Greek empire re-established.

Innocent was by no means displeased with the crusaders for affording him an opportunity of establishing the supremacy of the Holy See over the Eastern churches ; he replied with great prudence and dignity to the letters in which Baldwin announced his election, recommending several excellent measures to the new monarch for consolidating his authority. Nor was this the only advantage gained by the pope : the French monarch sanctioned the crusade undertaken against the Albigenses (A.D. 1208), and Otho was unanimously invited to assume the empire after the assassination of the duke of Suabia. But Otho had scarcely received the imperial crown from Innocent, when his determination to maintain the rights of the empire against the usurpations of the Holy See, involved him in a war with his former zealous protector. Innocent excommunicated Otho, released his subjects from their oath of allegiance, declared himself the supporter of the claims of Frederic, which he had been the first to set aside, summoned the electors to proclaim that young prince emperor, and invited to his aid all the princes who were enemies of the sovereign, whose cause ambition had induced him to advocate during ten years, and which the same ambition now led him to oppose. Otho boldly prepared to meet the storm ; having subdued the chief of the discontented princes in Germany, he marched, aided by the forces of his uncle John, king of England, against his most inveterate enemy, Philip Augustus. The hostile armies encountered each other at the bridge of Rovines. After a protracted but not very sanguinary battle, Otho was defeated (A.D. 1213), and was never afterwards able to make head against his rival. Finding that the superiority

of Frederic was complete, Otho retired to his hereditary state of Brunswick, and passed the remainder of his life in unostentatious devotion.

The vengeance of Innocent extended from Otho to his allies, and he was especially furious against John, with whom he had already an angry controversy, respecting the presentation to the see of Canterbury. It is not our purpose to dwell upon this period, the most calamitous and disgraceful in English history. John by his cowardice and misconduct had lost the greater part of the continental dominions belonging to his family; his tyranny alienated from him the affections of the English barons; his riotous debaucheries had exhausted his exchequer; and his murder of his nephew, Arthur, had rendered his name odious throughout Christendom. He was excommunicated by the pope, not for his crimes, but for almost the only virtuous action of his life, an attempt to maintain the ecclesiastical independence of England, and Innocent actually pretended to bestow the realm of England upon Philip Augustus (A. D. 1213). This was a stroke of policy as unexpected as it was refined; when Innocent, a few years before, had interfered as mediator between the kings of France and England, Philip in the full career of success had rejected his mediation, denying the pope's right to meddle in the quarrels of princes, or to prevent him from punishing a guilty vassal; but now, influenced by ambition, he virtually acknowledged the pontiff's right to bestow crowns at his pleasure, and thus passed sentence of condemnation on himself.

John's baseness made the pope's success complete; affrighted by the extensive preparations of Philip, he humbled himself before the papal legate, received Langton as archbishop of Canterbury, pardoned the prelates who had rebelled against him, permitted appeals to Rome, and acknowledged himself a vassal of the Holy See. The strange spectacle was exhibited of a king kneeling at the throne of a haughty legate, performing liege homage as to

his feudal lord, and paying a large sum of money as a pledge of his faith. The insolent legate trampled the money under his feet, retained possession of John's crown and sceptre for five days, and then restored them as a boon from the supreme pontiff. John was taken under the pope's especial protection, and Philip was forbidden to attack the faithful servant of the Church.

The English barons had long hated, they now despised their tyrant. To secure their privileges from his despotism, they levied a powerful army and were joined by Stephen Langton, who had become a prelate without ceasing to be a patriot. Deserted on every side, John was forced to yield to the demands of his subjects; and MAGNA CHARTA, the great foundation of British liberty, was extorted from him in the field of Runnymede, near Windsor. But John, as treacherous as he was cowardly, appealed to the pope, who declared the Charter null and void, forbidding its observance under pain of excommunication. The barons immediately offered their allegiance to Louis, the son of the king of France, and Philip, in spite of the papal prohibition, recalled his son from the Albigensian war, to invade England. The young prince on his arrival was received with joy by the great body of the English nobility, and solemnly crowned in London. Innocent, while preparing a new array of excommunications, died at Rome (A. D. 1216), leaving behind him the fame of having accomplished greater designs, and caused more blood to be shed in the field, and on the scaffold, than any of his predecessors. John soon followed him to the grave, and the English barons, learning that Louis was inclined to deal treacherously towards them, gradually acknowledged the claims of prince Henry, the son of their deceased monarch. Louis, menaced by pope Honorius, deserted by his father, and defeated severely at Lincoln, at last consented to abandon the crown of England (A. D. 1217), and having stipulated for the security of his

partisans, returned home, with more honour than usually attends a vanquished invader.

To prevent interrupting the narrative of the wars between France and England, the history of the crusade against the Albigenses has been deferred, until the account of John's inglorious career was completed. Before entering on the Albigensian persecutions, it will be necessary to give some preliminary account of the state of Southern France. At the accession of Philip Augustus, the part of France possessed by its titular king was inferior in extent and power to the Germanic provinces of Lorraine and Burgundy on the east, the Anglican dominions on the west, and the province of Provence, Languedoc and Catalonia in the south, which depended upon the king of Arragon. A fortunate combination of circumstances rather than his own abilities enabled Philip Augustus to acquire half of Anglican France, Aquitaine being almost the only province retained by the English, but he had no reason to hope for a similar triumph over the king of Arragon. The southern provinces of France were inhabited by an enlightened industrious race, attached equally to literature and commerce, whose language, the Provençal, was at that period the most refined and cultivated in Europe. A religious reformation was naturally commenced by an intellectual people, disgusted by the vices of a profligate clergy, and shocked by the superstitions which surrounding ignorance had produced, and pontifical craft encouraged. The "pate'rins," as the reforming preachers were called, distinguished themselves by a rigid purity of life, a simplicity of doctrine, and a disregard of splendid ceremonials, which were powerfully contrasted with the luxury of the Romish dignitaries, the difficulties of transubstantiation, and the pride, pomp, and circumstance displayed in the sacrifice of the mass. Nevertheless, many of the popes were contented to regard the "pate'rins" as a new order of monks, whose efforts tended to increase the

moral purity of the people, without endangering the unity of the Church. Innocent III. was less tolerant ; while his political intrigues filled Europe with public wars, and convulsed every Christian kingdom, his active mind was employed in enforcing strict uniformity of opinion even on the most trifling points, and crushing all independence of mind, and every exertion of the faculty of thought in religious matters. He was hurried onward to this fatal resolution by the zeal of the Albigensian missionaries, who were spreading their doctrines through Germany, Spain and Italy, with so much success, that if they did not meet a speedy check it seemed probable that they would soon become too powerful for the Church. To secure supporters in the infamous scheme he had formed for the suppression of heresy, he declared that the goods of detected heretics, should be forfeited to the princes by whom they were punished ; and as if avarice by itself would not be a sufficiently powerful motive, he excommunicated all who refused to profit by this sweeping act of confiscation.

Raymond VI., count of Toulouse, was unwilling to engage in a doubtful war with the majority of his subjects, and still more reluctant to permit a catholic army, levied by Castelnau the papal legate, among his enemies, to enter his territories. Peter de Castelnau, enraged at his hesitation, fulminated an edict of excommunication against Raymond, placed his dominions under an interdict, and obtained from the pope a confirmation of his sentence (A. D. 1267). Soon afterwards, Castelnau was slain by a gentleman of Toulouse, whom he had insulted, and Innocent immediately directing his vengeance against Raymond, who was wholly innocent, not only excommunicated him afresh, but preached a crusade against his dominions. The papal emissaries had little success with Philip Augustus, who was too busily engaged in war with John and the emperor Otho, to attend to ecclesiastical affairs ; but they procured the aid of the monks of

Citeaux, who preached this new crusade with more zeal than Peter the Hermit, or Foulk of Nouilly had shown against the Mohammedans.

But Innocent not only granted to those who bore arms against the Albigenses, greater indulgencies than had been conceded to those who served in Palestine; he founded in Languedoc, a new monastic order, placed under the superintendence of a Spanish bigot named Dominic, and nicknamed a Saint, whose object should be the inquiring out and punishing of heresy. It is scarcely necessary to add that this was the origin of the Inquisition.

An army of fanatics was soon levied, for superstition and the hopes of plunder were powerful motives among the ignorant population, in the provinces surrounding Languedoc; but many of superior rank rendered themselves infamous by joining in this expedition, amongst whom the most distinguished was, Simon de Montfort earl of Leicester, who shared with the papal legate, Arnold abbot of Citeaux, the command of the catholic forces. On the approach of these formidable enemies, Raymond made every effort to avert the coming danger, by offers of submission, but he humbled himself in vain (A.D. 1209). The ferocious bands burst into the devoted territories of the Albigenses, and converted their smiling fields into a desert. It would require a volume to describe a portion of the horrors inflicted by their ferocity and fanaticism; the annals of the world do not supply a parallel to the massacres, the devastations, and the cruelties of the crusaders. Catholics suffered as well as heretics: "kill all!" exclaimed the abbot of Citeaux, when asked how the orthodox should be distinguished from the guilty: "kill all! God will know how to distinguish those that belong to him." Fifteen thousand victims were slaughtered at the storming of Beziers, without glutting the thirst of the crusaders for blood. The most illustrious of the prisoners were burned alive, while the crowds of clergy

that accompanied Montfort's army surrounded the burning piles, singing songs of triumph that were at once an insult to the victims, and an outrage to the God of heaven.

It would be unjust to throw the blame of these horrors on the ignorant hordes engaged in their perpetration; the greater part of the crusaders sincerely believed that they were performing an acceptable service to God by destroying his enemies, and whenever they felt an emotion of pity they deemed themselves guilty of a crime to be atoned for by confession and penance. But there was more cold calculation and self-interest in the fanaticism of the monks of Cîteaux; they found that the preaching of a crusade was a profitable trade, and they continued it, after the suspected countries had been subdued, peace granted to the princes, and protection to the people, that had submitted. In consequence of their exertions new hordes of fanatics were continually poured into Languedoc, and thus Simon de Montfort was compelled to persevere in war, and to neglect the securing of his conquests. But as these tumultuous bands returned home, at the end of every campaign, Simon found himself left only with a few followers, in the midst of a population goaded by persecution to madness. Revolts were frequent, new armies of crusaders were levied to suppress them, and new massacres perpetrated. The unfortunate count of Toulouse endeavoured, by every possible means, to conciliate Innocent, and save his wretched subjects from extermination; but the partisans of Montfort, and the monks of Cîteaux, induced the pope to refuse him protection. Again the war was renewed, and the atrocities perpetrated at Beziers, exceeded those at the storming of Lavaur*. The

* To prevent any suspicion of prejudice, we shall extract the account of the treatment of the prisoners taken at Lavaur, from the cotemporary Catholic historian, the monk of Vaux-Cernay. "They soon dragged out of the castle, Almeric, lord of Montreal, and other chevaliers, to the number of eighty. The noble earl (De Montfort)

siege of Toulouse was the next great enterprise of the crusaders, to which they were invited by the bishop of that city. Montfort was finally obliged to raise the siege; but the loss of their great protector, the king of Arragon, who was slain at the battle of Muret (A.D. 1213), proved fatal to the Albigenses, and they were forced to submit to the discretion of their enemies. A general council was assembled, to decide the fate of the conquered Provençals: it assembled at the Lateran, on the 11th of November, A.D. 1215, and was the most numerous that had ever met in Christendom. Besides fourteen hundred ecclesiastics, Innocent saw assembled round his throne, ambassadors from the emperors of Germany and Constantinople, from the kings of France, England, Hungary, Jerusalem, Cyprus, and Arragon, and from an immense number of minor princes and free cities. At this council the dominions of the count of Toulouse were transferred to Simon de Montfort; heretics were ordered to be punished by the secular power; and all princes obliged to swear, that they would extirpate false doctrines in their several dominions.

The complete success of the crusaders against the Albigenses led to quarrels between the conquerors; the papal legate and Simon had seen prince Louis come to take a share in the war, with great jealousy, and could not conceal their joy when he left the crusade to contend for the crown

immediately ordered that they should be hanged from gibbets. Scarcely however had Almeric, the largest of them, been suspended, when all the gibbets fell down, for in the hurry, they had not been sufficiently secured in the ground. The earl seeing that this produced a great delay, ordered that the remainder should be put to the sword; and the pilgrims receiving the command with great delight, soon massacred them on the spot. The lady of the castle, who was the sister of Almeric, and an execrable heretic, was thrown into a well, which was then filled up with stones. Finally, our pilgrims collected the numerous heretics that the castle contained, and burned them alive with great joy."—*Petri Val. Cern. Hist. Albig. c. 52.*

of England. Delivered from this formidable competitor, they disagreed about the division of the spoil; Raymond's partisans took advantage of the opportunity to assert his claims, and even the orthodox, who had suffered almost as severely as the dissidents from the ravages of the adventurers and the tyranny of De Montfort, embraced the cause of their rightful sovereign. The city of Toulouse opened its gates to Raymond: a new army of crusaders was raised to besiege it; but the inhabitants made a gallant defence, and the ferocious Simon was slain in a sortie (A.D. 1218). Almeric de Montfort, his son and successor, was soon forced to raise the siege, and had finally the mortification to see the territories his father had won by a series of crimes, wrested from his family, and annexed to the crown of France.

For some years after Simon de Montfort's death, the political affairs of Europe cease to be remarkable for any thing but the tranquillity which seemed to be produced by exhaustion. Men were weary of the numerous violent changes they had witnessed, and monarchs became disgusted with wars, in which after a lavish waste of blood and treasure, no permanent effect was produced. Happily for the peace of Christendom, a new crusade offered employment to those adventurers whom a long practice in war had disqualified for the pursuits of private life. This new expedition procured also some respite for the unhappy Albigenses, but it was a delusive calm; the exiles returned to their homes, and the persecuted quitted their fastnesses in the mountains, to enjoy only a few brief years of quiet, and then fall victims to a fresh outbreak of avarice and fanaticism.

CHAPTER XXV.

End of the Crusades.—Final loss of the Holy Land.

(From A.D. 1218 to A.D. 1292.)

HONORIUS III. succeeded Innocent on the throne of St. Peter (A. D. 1216), and though he did not inherit all the violence and haughtiness of that prelate, he did not fail to exhibit proofs of a despotic spirit. He had been the minister of the emperor Frederic II., a circumstance that only urged him to aggressions against his former master. He began by ordering him to resign the crown of Sicily to his son, prince Henry; and though the death of Otho had rendered Frederic's claim to the empire indisputable, he refused to perform the ceremony of coronation without the emperor's promising to lead a new crusade. Palestine was now regarded as a place of political exile, and Frederic II. had grown so powerful, that Honorius anxiously sought a pretext for his banishment. The emperor, descended from Norman princes, vowed that he would deliver the Holy Land, with a mental reservation, that he would choose his own time for performing his promise; he was anxious to secure the submission of Germany, which he deemed of more importance than the recovery of Palestine. Honorius entertained a different opinion, and issued his edicts to the different monarchs of Europe. He commanded Philip Augustus to send no aid to prince Louis, then engaged in the conquest of England; he ordered Louis, whom he excommunicated every Sunday, to return home, and his ally, the king of Scotland, to submit to the rightful heir of England, Henry III.; he threatened Theodore Comnenus, who maintained the shadow of a Greek empire at Thessalonica, with ruin, if he did not submit to the Holy See; and, finally, he issued mandates to the princes and free

cities of Languedoc, commanding them to expiate their heresies by joining in a new crusade.

The possessions of the Christians in Palestine were limited to the cities of Tyre and Acre ; in the latter place a numerous army of adventurers, chiefly from the south of Europe, assembled (A. D. 1218), under the guidance of John de Brienne, titular king of Jerusalem, and the papal legate Pelagius. It was resolved to make Egypt the theatre of the new war, for experience had proved that the possession of this country was necessary to the security of Palestine. At first the efforts of the crusaders were crowned with success ; Damietta, the key of Egypt, was taken by storm, and the Sultan Kamel; in alarm, offered favourable conditions of peace. John de Brienne, and the leaders of the military orders, would have gladly accepted the offer, but Pelagius, who had taken his determination to act the part of a general, threatened excommunication against all who would not march with him to the siege of Cairo. In consequence of this resolution, the Christians advanced into the interior, meeting with no interruption from the crafty Sultan, until they had got beyond the reach of succour. Kamel then cut the reservoirs and dykes of the Nile at the period of its annual inundation, and laid all the plains under water. Destitute of provisions, unable to advance or retreat, the flood rising breast-high in their camp, nothing was left to the crusaders but to surrender at discretion. The Sultan Kamel however generously granted them terms of capitulation, and as soon as the treaty was signed, relieved their distress by a plentiful supply of provisions. With shame and sorrow the crusaders abandoned Damietta (A. D. 1221), and were constrained to confess that they owed their lives to Mohammedan clemency.

The death of Philip Augustus (A. D. 1223), who may be justly regarded as the founder of the French monarchy, produced little change in the political condition of Europe. His successor Louis VIII. at first pursued his father's wise

plan of weakening the English influence in France, but yielding to the commands of pope Honorius, he made peace with Henry III., procured from Almeric de Montfort a cession of his claims to the country of Toulouse, and headed a new crusade against the Albigenses. He encountered a fierce resistance; but just as success began to dawn on his efforts, the crusading army was attacked by an epidemic, to which Louis himself fell a victim (A. D. 1226). But his widow, Blanche of Castile, who acted as regent during the minority of her son Louis IX., continued the war in Languedoc, and the Provençals were finally subjected to the despotism of the French kings, and the tyranny of the Inquisition.

The delay of Frederic II. to undertake a crusade, and his refusal to admit the bishops nominated by the pope, into Apulia, had nearly led to a war between him and Honorius. It was prevented by the death of the latter, but the emperor found in the new pontiff, Gregory IX., a more imperious rival, and a more vindictive enemy. He excommunicated Frederic for delaying his expedition, and soon after, learning that he had sailed (A. D. 1228), excommunicated him a second time because he did not wait for absolution*.

* The contest between Frederic and the pope was inconceivably ridiculous: they exhausted the prophetic Scriptures, especially the book of Revelations, in finding types and abusive epithets for each other: it is not easy to discover which was the better scold, but if there be any difference, the advantage lies with Frederic. Two remarkable events in this scandalous controversy must be noticed. Gregory accused Frederic of having written a work called "The Three Impostors, namely Moses, Christ, and Mohammed." The book was prohibited, answered, and reviled, without having ever existed; for the blasphemous publication that appeared with that title at a later age, is a stupid forgery.

A priest in Paris who was ordered to publish the papal bull of excommunication against Frederic, made the following sensible speech to his congregation: "My brethren, I am commanded to excommunicate the emperor Frederic; I do not know the cause, I only know that there have been great quarrels and fierce hatred between him and the

He went farther: pushing his vengeance to insanity, he assailed Frederic in Palestine, arrested his success, fettered his soldiers, and even exhorted his army to betray him. Notwithstanding these anathemas, no prince ever succeeded so well in these wars: though opposed by the clergy, and faintly supported by the military orders, he compelled the Sultan Kamel to sue for peace, and obtained the restoration of Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Sidon. But Frederic found himself hated by those whom he had delivered; at Jerusalem he had to place the crown on his own head, for no ecclesiastic would perform the ceremony of coronation; at Acre he received information from the Sultan, that the Templars and Hospitallers had offered to betray him to the Saracens. From Europe he received intelligence equally alarming: Gregory had attacked Apulia, commissioned a host of monks to preach a crusade against Frederic, reanimated the Lombard league, levied subsidies throughout Christendom, and placed John de Brienne, titular king of Jerusalem*, at the head of the pontifical forces. The emperor was therefore compelled to leave Palestine, and return to protect his own dominions.

Nothing could exceed Gregory's rage when he heard that Frederic had concluded a treaty with Sultan Kamel; his enemy, disengaged from the holy war, and free from his vows, was about to meet him on equal terms, and there was reason to dread the result of the contest. A circular was sent to the princes of Christendom, denouncing the late treaty as "an atrocious crime, which ought to inspire the world with as much astonishment as horror."

pope. Not knowing which of the two is in fault, I excommunicate as far as in my power, whichever has done the wrong, and I absolve the sufferer."—The honest priest however was afterwards compelled to make a public apology for his wit.

* Frederic had married John de Brienne's daughter, the princess Yoland, and the crown of Jerusalem had been ceded to him as her marriage portion; but the cession was deemed invalid, as it had not been confirmed by the pope.

New anathemas were hurled against Frederic, declaring his crown forfeited, and his subjects absolved from their allegiance, because, as the pope declared, "no one ought to keep faith with one, who was an enemy to God and his saints, and had trampled upon the divine commandments." The prompt arrival of the emperor was fatal to the papal machinations; Frederic speedily subdued his enemies, appeased the discords between the Guelphs and Ghibelins, and won absolution by his victories. (A. D. 1230.) But peace between such rivals could not be of long continuance; the cities of the Lombard league, animated by a love of liberty, readily seized the pretext of religion to war against the imperial despotism, and Italy became the prey of civil feuds, from the Alps to the Straits of Messina. At length Frederic having bestowed the island of Sardinia on his natural son, Gregory, who claimed all the islands in the world as fiefs of the Holy See, once more excommunicated Frederic, and offered the imperial crown to Robert count of Artois, the brother of the king of France.

Louis IX. had been educated by his fanatical mother in the principles of the most intolerant bigotry; during his minority the ruin of the Albigenses was consummated, the Inquisition established in full force, and the most inhuman edicts issued for the suppression of heresy. His earliest ordinances were an extension of these monstrous decrees, containing the most barbarous rules for the treatment of Jews and heretics. But Louis was tenacious of the rights of kings, and he therefore refused the offered crown. Gregory finding his machinations of no avail, died of a broken heart (A. D. 1241); his successor Celestin IV. was hurried off by disease before he could be consecrated, and the Holy See remained vacant for two years.

In the meantime the French, under the king of Navarre, and the English, commanded by Richard earl of Cornwall, made a fresh effort to sustain the Christians in Palestine. The former was defeated, but the earl of Cornwall, taking

advantage of the terror which the name of the English Richard still inspired in the East, concluded a treaty with the Sultans of Syria and Egypt, on terms even more favourable than those that had been granted to Frederic. But like the emperor, he experienced the ingratitude of the knights of Palestine, and as soon as the treaty was signed he returned to Europe. (A. D. 1241.)

Innocent IV. having been elected pope, assembled a general council at Lyons, in which Frederic was once more declared to be dethroned, and a crusade preached against him. (A. D. 1245.) Nor could the pope be persuaded to relax in his enmity, though a new enemy appeared, to destroy the last remnant of the Christian kingdom in Palestine. The Mongols or Moguls, a race more savage than the Turks, had long been subject to the emperors of northern China; but at the beginning of the thirteenth century, their different hordes being united under a young prince named Tenujim, they threw off the yoke and proclaimed their leader emperor, under the name of Jenghiz Khan. This formidable conqueror attacked the Chinese empire at the head of his numerous cavalry, and pushed his devastations to the banks of the Yellow river. Master of an immense booty, he only quitted China to seek new conquests. Central Asia was speedily subdued; he overthrew the kingdoms of Transoxiana, Khorazm, and Persia. On one side his armies continued the war in China, on the other they swept the banks of the Indus and the Euphrates, penetrated through Georgia to the north of the Black sea, subdued the Crimea, laid waste a part of Russia, and attacked the Bulgarians on the upper Volga. The Khorazmians, who had been the most potent of the Turkish sultanies, fled before these savage conquerors, and besought the sultans of Syria and Egypt to grant them new habitations; they were advised to seize on Palestine, and entering the country they commenced a war of extermination, sparing neither Christians nor Mohammedans.

The Sultan of Damascus joined the Latins, to stem the progress of these invaders ; their united forces engaged the Khorazmians in a battle that lasted two days, and which ended in the total defeat of the Christians and their Syrian allies. The consequence of this decisive defeat was the loss of all Palestine, except a few fortresses and cities on the sea-coast.

Louis IX., subsequently called St. Louis, had gained several French provinces from the English, and established the royal power over many of the feudatory princes who had preserved independent authority ; but he laid aside all these beneficial enterprizes to lead a new crusade, and persevered in his resolution, though it was opposed by his mother, his nobles, and many of the French prelates, and though it received little encouragement from Innocent, who was intent only on the destruction of Frederic. Having entrusted the regency to his mother, Louis sailed to Cyprus, where his army wintered. In the spring of the following year (A. D. 1249) he sailed for Egypt, and landing his forces in the teeth of a hostile army, gained such a decisive victory over the Mamelukes*, that the garrison of Damietta abandoned the city and fled to Cairo. It was the most favourable time in the year for advancing into the interior of Egypt, yet the crusaders lingered at Damietta from the 8th of June to the 20th of November, and then began their march when the season for action was passed. Even then there was much culpable delay, for more than a month was

* The Mamelukes were a standing army instituted by Saladin, and generally recruited from the offspring of slaves and captives. Like all troops of the kind, they soon became masters of the empire, and as we shall soon see, disposed of the throne at their pleasure. At the time that St. Louis invaded Egypt, the Mamelukes were chiefly composed of Turkish slaves purchased on the shores of the Black and Caspian seas, whom the Sultan, Malek Saleh, (surnamed Nejir-ed-din or the Star of Religion,) preferred to the Kúrds, who had previously formed the strength of the Egyptian army.

spent in advancing thirty miles ; during this time the Egyptian sultan, Malek Selah, died, an event that proved of no advantage to the Christians, for his vizier, Fakr-ed-din, was a general worthy of the crisis. On the 8th of February (A.D. 1250) the crusaders, after having been delayed for many weeks by the canal of Ashmún, bribed an Arab to point out a ford, and the van of their army, led by the count of Artois, passed over. The Mamelukes were broken by the furious charge of the French chivalry, and fled to Mansurah ; the count madly resolved to follow them into the town, attributing the dissuasions of the Templars and Hospitalers to cowardice. Perceiving that they were followed only by a portion of the Christian army, the Mamelukes rallied in the streets, the inhabitants of the town hurled every species of missile from the tops of the houses on the unfortunate crusaders, and nothing but the rapid advance of Louis with the main body could have saved the rear guard from annihilation*.

Louis had obtained a victory more ruinous than a defeat ; the canal of Ashmún was in his rear, the Mamelukes, headed by their young sultan, Turan Sháh, who had come from Syria on receiving the news of his father's death, occupied their front, and the Turkish galleys, rendering themselves masters of the Nile, intercepted his convoys, while his army was gradually wasted by pestilence and famine. An attempt to effect a retreat completed the ruin of the crusaders : they were attacked in the midst of their confusion by the Mamelukes, and either slain or made prisoners of war.

* The commentary of Napoleon Buonaparte on the conduct of St. Louis deserves to be quoted. " If on the 8th of June, 1249, St. Louis had adopted the same manœuvres as the French in 1798, he would have reached Mansurah on the 12th of June, and crossed the canal of Ashmún dry-shod, since at that time the waters of the Nile are at the lowest. He would have reached Cairo on the 26th of June, and thus conquered Lower Egypt in the month of his arrival."

Monstrolen, vol. i. 92.

Turan Sháh readily entered into a treaty with Louis, and his own captives, but before the negotiation was completed, Turan was murdered by his own soldiers, who elevated Bibars, one of their generals, and the first of the Mameluke sultans, to the vacant throne. The murderers of the sultan, however, fulfilled the terms of the negotiation he had commenced; Louis was surrendered on condition of yielding up Damietta and paying a large sum of money as a ransom for himself and his army.

From Damietta, Louis proceeded to Acre, where he endeavoured, not without success, to remedy by negotiation the calamities of the war. Taking advantage of the troubles and discontents produced by a change of dynasty in Egypt, and the dissensions between the Mohammedan princes, he succeeded in obtaining a remission of part of the stipulated ransom; and what he deemed more important, the burial of the mangled limbs of his soldiers, which the Mamelukes in barbarous triumph had fixed upon the walls of Damietta. While he was thus engaged, a strange project for his deliverance had been formed by the humbler classes of his subjects, which produced dangerous consequences. The belief was common among the peasantry of France, that "God, offended by the luxury of the prelates and the pride of the nobles, had chosen the humble and the weak, to put down the mighty from their seat." An unknown leader, by preaching these doctrines, brought multitudes of the peasants to join him in a crusade for the deliverance of Saint Louis; but at the same time troops of robbers and bandits embraced this pretext for appearing in arms, and filled France with confusion. These deluded creatures were finally proclaimed heretics, and hunted down like wild beasts. But even the news of these calamities failed to withdraw Louis from Palestine; but the death of his mother, whom alone he could trust with the administration in the political agitations of the period, at length induced him to return. His subjects hastened to

welcome his entry into Paris, (A. D. 1254,) but they saw with regret that he still bore the emblems of a crusader, and that all their acclamation failed to dispel even for a moment the profound sorrow that was manifest in his countenance.

The blame of the failure of this crusade, was generally and not unjustly attributed to the pope; his outrageous hatred of Frederic II. had prevented that sovereign from affording the aid to Louis which he was desirous to grant, for his forces were kept constantly employed suppressing insurrections raised by the papal emissaries. His death (A. D. 1250) did not abate the fury of the pontiff; he proclaimed a new crusade against Conrad IV., Frederic's son and successor, until at length the most devoted partisans of the church were disgusted by his violence, and Blanche, as regent of France, threatened with the penalties of confiscation those who engaged in a crusade against Conrad. This was almost the last act of her life; it was a recantation of her former bigoted devotion to the Holy See; unfortunately it came too late to serve her son or her country. Conrad died suddenly (A. D. 1254), and hoping to conciliate this mortal enemy of his family, he bequeathed his infant son Conradin to the guardianship of the pope.

The death of Conrad was fatal to the repose of Germany; William count of Holland, and the landgrave of Thuringia, were elected to the empire by opposite parties; they were again succeeded by Richard duke of Cornwall, and Alphonso king of Castile: for twenty years the country was distracted by hostile factions; until at length Rodolph of Hapsburgh was called to the imperial throne (A. D. 1273), and by his judicious administration restored public tranquillity. Manfred, a natural son of the emperor Frederic, vigorously exerted himself to maintain the rights of his family to the throne of the two Sicilies. The death of pope Innocent (A. D. 1254) favoured his designs, for the new pontiff, Alexander IV., inherited his predecessor's ambition, but not his energy and talent. Though the state of the Christians in the east was

truly calamitous, and the Latin empire of Constantinople tottered to its fall, Alexander directed his entire attention to overthrowing Manfred. He bestowed the crown of Sicily on Edmund, the youngest son of the English monarch Henry III., and granted a remittance of their crusading vows to all who would join in humbling his enemy. Urban IV., who succeeded Alexander (A. D. 1261), adopted the same course of policy; and finding that the troubles of England prevented Edmund from undertaking the war against Manfred, he transferred the crown of the two Sicilies to Charles, count of Anjou, brother of the king of France. Clement IV., who next received the papacy (A. D. 1265), confirmed this arrangement, and Charles led a powerful army into Italy. He encountered Manfred near the city of Benevento, and gained a decisive victory, in which Manfred himself was slain. The savage conqueror gave Benevento for eight days to be pillaged by his soldiers, and cruelly put to death Manfred's sister, wife and children. The reign of Charles was in accordance with its sanguinary commencement; his cruelty, his pride and his avarice brought upon him the censure even of the pope, while the insolence of his French associates provoked the Neapolitans almost to madness. The eyes of the Italians were turned to the young Conradin, and that brave prince, with very inadequate resources, prepared to make a struggle for his inheritance. (A. D. 1268.) His progress was rapid: the Ghibelins of Lombardy and Tuscany flocked to his standard; Rome itself, in spite of the papal denunciations, received him within its walls, and confident in his strength, he resolved to hazard a decisive battle. The raw levies of Conradin were not a match for the experienced veterans of Charles; they broke the first lines of the enemy, and rushed forward in disorder, but at the moment when victory seemed certain, they were charged in flank by a body of reserve and thrown into remediless confusion. Conradin, after having witnessed the slaughter of his best troops, was taken pri-

soner; the pope stimulated the natural cruelty of Charles, urging him to put to death the prince whose inheritance he had usurped, and the last of the Hohenstauffen terminated his life on the scaffold. Conradin met the stroke of death with dauntless resolution; he saw without a shudder his cousin, Frederic of Austria, precede him to the block; he stripped off his mantle without aid; and before he bent his neck to the executioner, he flung his glove into the midst of the crowd, as a legacy of vengeance to the partisans of his family.

Clement IV. died a few weeks after his victim, and the Holy See remained vacant for nearly three years. Charles of Anjou made a barbarous use of his triumph; the partisans of Conrad were every where persecuted and slaughtered as enemies of the Church, and the clergy did not disdain to perform the part of informers. Those who regard St. Louis as a Christian hero, have expressed surprise at his never having interfered to check his brother's cruelty, but fanaticism "has no bowels of compassion," and it possessed the whole soul of Louis, and seemed to have acquired fresh strength from age, which weakens all other passions. He was resolved to undertake a new crusade, and if possible save some relic of the Christian kingdom of Palestine, which had been all but annihilated by the Egyptian Sultan Bibars. He sailed on this fatal expedition, (A. D. 1270,) but instead of seeking Palestine he proceeded to besiege Tunis, in the strange hope of converting its sovereign. After some trifling successes the plague broke out in the camp of the crusaders, and Louis, after having seen his best soldiers, his principal nobles, and his dearest friends swept away by the pestilence, became himself its victim at the age of fifty-six. On the very day of his death, Charles of Anjou, the secret instigator of the war, arrived in the camp with fresh succours. He exerted himself with some success to remedy the calamities of the army, and after having continued the war for two

months longer, made peace with the king of Tunis on honourable conditions.

Prince Edward, the gallant son of Henry III., had engaged to take a part in this crusade; but the death of Louis prevented the junction of the French and English forces. Undismayed by this event, Edward pursued his course to Acre, where he landed, with a force of about one thousand knights and their attendants. The name of Plantagenet was still respected by the Christians, and dreaded by the Mohammedans in Asia; the remains of the different military orders flocked to the standard of the British prince, and he soon found himself at the head of a small but powerful army. He gained several important advantages, the chief of which was the taking of Nazareth by storm. But Edward, like the other crusaders, found the climate his worst enemy. His soldiers sank beneath a burning Syrian sun, pestilence appeared in his camp, and he himself was dangerously wounded by the emissaries of the "Old Man of the Mountain." The governor of Jaffa had entered into a negotiation with prince Edward, but being censured by the Sultan of Egypt for having courted the friendship of an infidel, he employed two assassins to murder him in his tent. Edward was lying sick on his couch, when one of these emissaries rushed in and struck him with his dagger. The activity of Edward prevented the assassin from repeating the blow, and the wretch was seized by the attendants. It has been said that Edward's life was saved by his wife Eleonora sucking the poison from the wound, but this is one of the many fictions of romance, too often incautiously adopted by grave historians. His escape was owing to the strength of his constitution, and the skill of his physician. Soon after his recovery, Edward concluded peace with the Sultan of Egypt (A.D. 1272), and returned to Europe.

Gregory X. having been chosen pope, meditated the plan of leading a crusade in person to the Holy Land, but he found full employment at home in watching the ambitious

Charles of Anjou, who was becoming as formidable to the Holy See, as Frederic himself had been ; and in endeavouring to reconcile the Greek and Latin churches by negotiating with Michael Palæologus, the sovereign of the restored Byzantine empire. Philip III. of France, warned by the fate of his father, refused to join any distant expedition, and devoted his whole attention to restore order in his dominions ; Edward was by no means inclined to join in a second expedition ; the emperor Rodolph readily made promises, but soon showed that he had no design of performing them ; Charles of Anjou indeed, who aspired to be Emperor of the East, was not only ready but eager to march ; the pope however had too much reason to dread that prince's ambition, and secretly counteracted his projects. Charles notwithstanding proceeded to make immense preparations, but to support their expence, he was forced to levy the most onerous imposts on the people of Naples and Sicily. His ministers and officers, as merciless and more avaricious than their master, abandoned themselves to every kind of excess : the liberty of citizens, the honour of females, and the property of individuals were wantonly assailed by the violence, brutality, and avarice of these licentious monsters. The death of Gregory X. (A.D. 1276) and of the three popes that followed him in succession, within the same year, seemed to secure the authority of Charles ; but the election of Nicholas III., a cardinal of high birth and boundless pride, exposed him to an enemy whose ambition equalled his own, and was supported by the whole power of the Church.

Procida, the friend and physician of Frederic and Manfred, was the deadly enemy of the murderer of Conradin ; he incessantly instigated the king of Arragon, who had married the sister of Conradin, to assert the rights of his queen ; he visited Constantinople, to rouse Palæologus to resist the ambitious projects of Charles ; and he came to Rome disguised as a monk, for the purpose of engaging Nicholas to

revenge a personal affront he had received from the French prince. His emissaries went through the island of Sicily, reviving the ancient affection of the inhabitants for the family of the Hohenstauffen, and encouraging them to take vengeance on their oppressors. A conspiracy was formed, which embraced the eastern and western extremes of Europe, when its explosion was unexpectedly delayed by the sudden death of Nicholas*.

Charles took advantage of this event to secure his power; he marched an army towards Rome, and terrified the cardinals into the election of his creature, Martin IV. The ardent attachment of the new pope to the interests of Charles did not daunt Procida; he prevailed on the king of Arragon to put to sea, but popular rage had already burst forth; the celebrated Sicilian Vespers had rung. It is impossible to discover how far this massacre had been premeditated. On Easter eve, a French soldier had insulted a Sicilian lady, who was going to hear Vespers at a church near Palermo; her friends struck him down; a contest arose between the soldiers and the Sicilians; the Vesper bell served as a tocsin to the multitude, and ere the night closed in, not a single Frenchman remained alive in Palermo. Similar massacres were perpetrated in the other Sicilian towns, and the kingdom which Charles of Anjou had so dearly purchased, was lost. (A.D. 1282.) The whole French nation was anxious to

* Nicholas struck a fatal blow at the papacy, by means apparently calculated to strengthen its power. He procured from the emperor Rodolph the absolute cession of the provinces granted to the popes by Charlemagne, and Louis the Debonnaire, (commonly called the patrimony of St. Peter,) and annexed them as a royalty to the Holy See. He did not perceive that this measure would infallibly lead to restricting the power of the pope within the limits of his own states. From the moment that the Papacy had definite and recognized frontiers, all the advantages resulting from the undefined nature of its power were irretrievably lost. The nepotism, which soon became injurious to the spiritual power, by mixing it up with petty temporal intrigues, dates from the reign of Nicholas.

punish this revolt; Philip, sunk in indolence, was forgotten or despised by his subjects. Charles on the contrary, by his daring exploits and brilliant projects, had become a popular hero. The pope was equally indignant; he excommunicated Peter, king of Arragon, and offered his estates to the king of France. But excommunications proved futile weapons: Arragon not only maintained its independence, but preserved Sicily; and the claims that the French princes maintained over Italy, and especially the kingdom of Naples, entailed a century of calamities on their country.

While the popes were maintaining an expensive contest in Italy, and wasting in useless wars the treasures with which mistaken piety had supplied them for the deliverance of Palestine, they lost the supremacy which they had usurped over princes, and permitted the destruction of the last held of the Christians in the Holy Land. Ashraf, the Sultan of Egypt, provoked by insults wantonly offered to his subjects, proclaimed his intention of driving the Latins from Asia, and summoned all the Mussulmans to aid his enterprise. The summons was obeyed not only by his own subjects, but by Syrians, Persians, and Arabians. He was soon at the head of a powerful army, well supplied with the munitions and engines of war, which he led to the siege of Acre. (A.D. 1291.) The defence was vigorous and protracted, but the garrison was divided by petty factions, which impeded the best measures of the commanders. At length the fall of a tower opened a practicable breach to the assailants, and their countless hordes rushed through the opening. Acre was divided into different quarters, inhabited by the several nations who had sent pilgrims to Palestine, and the dependents on the military orders; the mutual jealousy of the Christians had induced them to fortify these quarters, and the Mussulmans found that almost every street required a separate siege. In consequence of this obstinate resistance, quarter was neither

asked nor offered ; of the Hospitallers only seven escaped : the Templars were totally destroyed. The Mamelukes, to accelerate the surrender of the castles, set fire to the town ; the inhabitants, and a part of the garrison, fled for refuge to the ships in the bay ; but even the elements seemed to have combined against the last remnant of the crusaders ; a dreadful storm drove their vessels against the shore, multitudes were drowned, those who escaped to shore fell by the swords of the Egyptians, and a few stragglers were all that made their way to Europe to tell the tale of their calamity. Some time afterwards a body of the Templars made an effort to seize a fortress on the sea-coast, where they might hold out until succours came from Europe, but they were routed with great slaughter, and Palestine thenceforth remained under the sway of the Mohammedans.

The military orders, after the loss of the Holy Land, sank rapidly in public estimation, until the Knights Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John, took possession of Rhodes, and by their daring exploits at sea, became the terror of the Mohammedan powers. When driven from that island they removed to Malta, where they continued to exist as a separate state, until the beginning of the present century.

Far different was the fate of the gallant Templars ; their vast wealth and extensive possessions excited the cupidity of the French monarch, Philip the Fair, and he procured an edict for their destruction from Clement V. whom he had effectually assisted in obtaining the papacy. The most abominable and improbable charges were brought against the knights, rewards offered to their accusers, and all who dared to assert their innocence, were punished with torture. (A.D. 1230.) They were then mocked with the form of a trial, and put to a cruel death. Fifty-nine Templars were burned alive in France, all of whom protested their own innocence, and that of their order, with their latest breath ; every where throughout Europe their monasteries were

suppressed, and their estates confiscated. Thus perished an order of chivalry, which had long been regarded as the bulwark of Christendom, and which numbered among its members branches of almost every noble family in Europe.

From the time that Acre was taken by the Egyptians, the spirit of crusading rapidly disappeared; princes, ambitious of military glory during the ensuing century, occasionally made vows and promises that they would make an effort to redeem Palestine, but they never found an opportunity for their performance; the kingdoms of Europe had now gradually formed a system of states, that secured the progress of improvement, while their complicated politics and mutual wars engaged all attention, and employed all energies.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Formation of the States System in Western Europe.

(From A.D. 1300 to A.D. 1453.)

From the time that Charlemagne's empire had been overturned, the European kingdoms had gradually arranged themselves within natural frontiers, and nations differing in language, habits and interests, began for the most part to have separate governments. The progress of this beneficial change was impeded by a multitude of causes, the chief of which were the ardour for crusades, which directed the attention of princes and people to foreign lands, and the contests between the popes and the European monarchs, by which the mutual relations of spiritual and temporal authority were kept in constant confusion. In most European countries, but especially in France, there was a third

disturbing cause, the disputes between the monarchs and the great vassals of the crown : the struggle ended by establishing royal despotism in France, and constitutional freedom in England ; opposite results produced by the side which the people took in the controversy. The minor French nobility and the great bulk of the people, wearied by the tyranny of the feudal princes, eagerly supported the king ; the English barons fortunately did not possess such extravagant power, and their privileges were in a great degree connected with the general interests of the nation. Above all, there was in England an equality of civil rights, which the Norman conquest failed to destroy. "From the beginning our law was no respecter of persons *;" it screened no privileged order from the penalty of crimes, and granted to no favoured rank an exemption from the public burthens. There was consequently no angry feeling between the peerage and the people that could induce either to support the monarch, in order to gain a temporary triumph, whose final results would have proved injurious to both.

The extinction of the crusading spirit was followed by the rapid decay of the papal power, the consequence of its own extravagant pretensions. Celestin V., who had been elected to the papacy after the interregnum already mentioned, was persuaded to resign his throne by the crafty cardinal Cajetan, and had the mortification to see his advisor become his successor, under the title of Boniface VIII.† (A. D. 1295.) He began his reign by attempting to restore Sicily to the French princes, but the Islanders refused obedience and maintained their independence. He next offered himself as mediator between Philip the Fair, King of France,

* Hallam's Middle Ages, ii. 478.

† Boniface threw Celestin into prison, fearing that he might repent of his abdication, when he discovered the interested motives of his counsellors.

and his great vassals, Edward I. of England*, and the count of Flanders. This offer was accepted, but the decision of his holiness was so grossly partial, and so clearly intended to weaken the growing power of the French monarchy, that Philip refused obedience, and strong in the love of his people laughed the papal menaces to scorn.

Boniface, with more zeal than prudence, issued a bull commanding the clergy throughout Europe neither to pay subsidies, nor to yield obedience to the civil power. Such an edict excited universal indignation. Edward ordered that the English law courts should receive no complaints from ecclesiastics, but should try all suits instituted against them; Philip attacked Rome more effectually by prohibiting the exportation of coin bullion, provisions, or the munitions of war, without his express permission, thus at once cutting off the tribute paid to the Holy See. The controversy daily acquired fresh strength and bitterness; the Colonna family, expelled from Italy, found a safe asylum and an honorable reception in the court of France; the emperor Albert, excommunicated by the pope, was received into alliance by Philip; a violent bull issued by Boniface was torn to atoms, and burned in the presence of his legate, and his emissaries were banished. Angry letters were interchanged between the pontiff and the fearless monarch†, and Philip, appealing to the States General of his

* The English monarchs owed feudal allegiance to the French kings for their possessions as dukes of Normandy and Aquitaine, and earls of Anjou.

† Two of the letters deserve to be quoted as specimens of the diplomatic style of the age. The first is from the pope, and may be regarded as a summary of his insolent pretensions.

"Boniface pontiff, servant of the servants of God, to Philip, king of France. Fear God and keep his commandments. Learn that you are subject to us both in spiritual and temporal matters. If you have the ward of any benefices by the death of the incumbents, you are bound to account for the proceeds to their successors. If you have conferred any benefices, we pronounce your grants null *de jure*, and we

kingdom, found that the great majority of his subjects regarded the papal claims as a national insult.

Whilst Boniface was engaged in this struggle with the King of France, he did not neglect his pretensions over other kingdoms. He forbade Edward I. to continue the conquest of Scotland, but received in reply, a declaration that the crown of England was free, and that the nation would not permit the monarch to sacrifice his rights. He attempted to arrange a disputed succession in Hungary, and he secured Ferdinand IV. on the throne of Castile by declaring his father's marriage valid. But his war with Philip engaged the pope's most anxious attention ; their mutual animosities had grown to such a height that each resolved to dethrone the other. The emissaries of the French monarch actually arrested Boniface at Anagni, (A.D. 1303,) and though he was soon liberated, this indignity, and the growing hostility of the cardinals, broke his high spirit and hurried him to the grave. Benedict XI. succeeded, but after a brief reign was taken off by poison ; a French prelate was then chosen by the influence of Philip, who took the title of Clement V., and began his reign by sacrificing the Templars to the avarice of his patron *.

For many years the emperors of Germany had been de-

revoke them *de facto*. Those who entertain a contrary opinion shall be regarded as heretics."

Turn we now to the king's reply.

"Philip by the grace of God, king of the French, to Boniface falsely calling himself pope, little or no greeting. Let your great stupidity learn that we are not subject to any earthly power in temporal matters ; that the bestowing of benefices and vacant sees belongs to us, by right of our crown ; that we dispose of the revenues of vacant churches in right of our royal prerogative ; that our gifts of sees are valid for the past and the future, and that we will maintain with all our might those on whom we have conferred, and shall confer benefices. Those who suppose the contrary will be regarded by us as dolts and idiots."

* See before, page 387.

prived of all power in Italy : the Lombard cities, whether free or governed by tyrants, the popes, and the powerful republics of Venice and Genoa, had divided among them the government of the peninsula. But the study of the Latin poets, had spread among the Italians an anxiety for the restoration of the sway of the ancient Cæsars ; and when the emperor Henry VII., almost alone, appeared in Italy, he found that the cities and tyrants submitted to his rule as if by enchantment. This, however, was but a temporary triumph ; the pope formed a powerful party against the imperial claims, and while the contest was at its height, Henry died at Benevento, (A.D. 1313,) as is generally believed from poison administered to him in the sacrament by a Dominican monk. Clement V. followed the emperor to the grave in the following year, and his death produced new dissension, which still further weakened the power of the papacy.

To prevent an interruption in the papal history, the remarkable formation of a new European state has been passed over, and must now be briefly noticed. The Helvetic cantons of Ury, Switz and Underwald, had voluntarily placed themselves under the protection of Rodolph of Hapsburgh before his elevation to the empire, and had in general been treated with great kindness. When Albert succeeded his father in the Austrian dominions, he assumed the government of these provinces as his absolute right, and after his accession to the empire tried to form them into a principality for one of his sons. The Swiss, as the inhabitants were usually called from the principal canton, tenacious of their independence, refused to sanction this arrangement, and Albert resolved to break their proud spirit by severity. His tyranny * only accelerated the insurrection of the moun-

* The tyranny of the Austrians is said to have been carried to a most absurd length. Tradition reports, that Gessler, the governor of Ury, placed his cap on a pole in the market-place of Altorf, and ordered

taineers ; on an appointed day, (Jan. 1, 1308,) the patriots in the three cantons simultaneously flew to arms, and seized the Austrian castles, conducting the garrisons in safety to the frontiers. Several of the neighbouring cantons joined the confederacy, and thus formed the Helvetian or Swiss republic.

Clement V., to please his patron Philip, had transferred the seat of the papal government from Rome to Avignon *, a circumstance that greatly weakened the authority of the Holy See. His death, followed by that of Philip the Fair, was the signal for angry controversy between the cardinals, that almost burst forth into acts of violence, causing the papacy to remain vacant for two years and four months ; during which period, Louis X., the successor of Philip the Fair, terminated his brief and inglorious reign. His queen

every passenger to pay it obeisance. William Tell refusing this absurd homage, was ordered to shoot an arrow through an apple placed on the head of his own son at a certain distance. He performed the feat in the presence of the governor, but Gessler perceiving a second arrow at his girdle, demanded its use. Tell having first stipulated for safety, declared, that if his first arrow had failed, he would have pierced the governor's heart with the second. Gessler in a rage, ordered that Tell should be imprisoned for life in a strong castle on the Lake of Lucerne, and embarked in the boat ordered to convey him thither, that he might personally see so dangerous a prisoner properly secured. During their voyage a fierce storm arose, and Tell, one of the most expert boatmen in the country, was released from his bonds to aid in saving the vessel. He steered her close to a rock, sprang ashore, and was safe in the mountains before the astonished Austrians could commence a pursuit. He lay concealed until the day appointed for the insurrection, when his skill and valour greatly contributed to establishing the independence of Switzerland.

This romantic tale, though adopted by many grave historians, is a mere fiction in its most essential parts. The father shooting the apple off his son's head is a Danish legend, and was current in Scandinavia many centuries before Tell was born.

* The residence of the popes in Avignon, which lasted seventy years, was called by the Italians, "The Babylonish captivity."

gave birth to a posthumous son, but both the mother and child died in a few months. Philip the Long, brother to the deceased monarch, succeeded to the French throne, and by his influence procured the election of John XXII. to the papacy. (A.D. 1316.) His pontificate partook of the agitation which convulsed Europe; the Guelphs and Ghibelins fought with fresh fury in Italy; the empire of Germany was divided into two hostile parties, ranged under the banners of Louis of Bavaria, and Frederic of Austria; Spain and Portugal, with difficulty maintained the independence of their Christian kingdoms against the Moors; in England, Edward II., defeated at Bannockburn, not only lost his father's conquests in Scotland, but was almost stripped of authority in England by his discontented vassals. Finally, France was distracted by the persecution of heretics, the insurrection of the peasants, and a war with the Flemings; and the Ottoman Turks* were destroying the miserable remnant of the empire of Constantinople. Switzerland was the only European country that could be contemplated by a philanthropist with satisfaction; its independence was secured by the battle of Morgarten, (Nov. 16th, 1315,) in which the Austrian power was wholly overthrown, and Louis of Bavaria, who was thus enabled to secure the empire, gratefully confirmed the liberties of the confederate cantons. But the success of Louis excited the jealousy of the pope; a new struggle commenced between the pontifical and imperial powers, which, after deluging Italy with blood, and filling Germany with confusion, left the parties nearly in their original condition. Louis had resolved to assemble a council at Munich, and accuse John as a tyrant and heretic, when the death of the turbulent pontiff (A.D. 1334,) restored peace for a season.

Philip the Long had succeeded his brother in France, according to a pretended ancient law, by which females were

* See the following chapter.

excluded from the French crown. This rule of succession, commonly called the Salic law, was first enforced against his own daughters; on the death of Philip, his brother, Charles IV., surnamed the Fair, succeeded to the throne, and after a reign of six years, died without male issue, bequeathing to France the horrors of a disputed succession. (A.D. 1328.) Philip of Valois, the grandson of Philip the Fair, was the nearest heir in the male line, but it was strenuously urged, that though females could not inherit the crown, they might transmit their rights to a male representative; and on this ground the English monarch, Edward III., claimed to be king of France, in right of his mother Isabella, the sister of the last three sovereigns. It is unnecessary here to relate the particulars of a contest so well known to every reader of English and French history; the wars between the French and English, the useless glories of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, the expulsion of the English from France, and the wars between the rival houses of York and Lancaster, produced no permanent effect on the political relations of the European states, and are fully described in the ordinary histories of England.

Benedict XII. commonly called "the white cardinal," succeeded the turbulent John in the papacy, and was anxious to restore peace to the church and the empire. But Philip of Valois was resolved to use to the utmost the power which the residence of the pope at Avignon had placed in the hands of the French monarchs; he obtained from Benedict the treasures amassed by pope John, the tenth part of the French ecclesiastical revenues, the condemnation of Edward III.'s claims to the crown of France, and a refusal to acknowledge Louis of Bavaria emperor. But the German princes and prelates resented this act of weakness: they declared in a solemn assembly, that an emperor, freely chosen by a majority of the electors, had no need of papal confirmation, and thus by one decisive blow, emancipated the empire.

Benedict was succeeded by Clement VI. (A.D. 1342), a pontiff, anxious to establish the extravagant claims of his predecessors; but the German diet refused all obedience to his mandates, and the prelates he appointed to English Sees, were prohibited from entering the country by the courageous Edward. The complicated politics of Italy engaged more of his attention, and produced results more gratifying to his ambition. Jane, queen of Naples, had consented, as is generally believed, to the murder of her husband, Andrew, brother of the king of Hungary, (A.D. 1346,) and had purchased her acquittal from the pope, by resigning to him the principality of Avignon. The emperor Louis, and the king of Hungary, united to punish the murder of Andrew; success at first crowned their efforts, but Clement, by his intrigues, raised a new war in Germany, and the sudden death of Louis (A.D. 1347) enabled the pope to have the election of his creature, Charles of Luxembourg, confirmed, a monarch who so readily sacrificed the imperial rights, that he was usually called "The King of the Priests." A more extraordinary revolution occurred about the same time in Rome; the ancient republic was revived for a brief space by Nicholas Rienzi, an obscure notary, who took the title of "Tribune of the People." After having reigned for a few months with great glory, he became intoxicated by the possession of power, and disgusted his supporters by the extravagance of his proceedings. The partisans of the pope, and the Roman nobles, conspired against him; the populace with its usual fickleness abandoned the favourite. Rienzi driven from Rome became a wanderer in the mountains, where he was at length seized, and brought as a prisoner to Avignon. But Clement did not gain much by this triumph: the Italian nobility, headed by the Visconti family, established an oligarchy in the patrimony of St. Peter, and paid little regard to the denunciations of the popes, so long as they remained north of the Alps.

In the pontificate of Innocent VI. who succeeded

Clement, (A.D. 1352,) the emperor Charles visited Italy, to receive the iron crown of Lombardy, and the imperial diadem at Rome. His base submission to the orders of the pontiff, from whom he accepted a passport before he dared to enter the city, disgusted even his steadiest partisans; he was insulted at every Italian city that he visited, and his return to Germany was an unvarying scene of humiliations. To crown the absurdity of his proceedings, he sent an army to aid the Guelphs against the Ghibelins, thus sacrificing the friends of the empire to papal despotism. Italy and Germany were convulsed by the papal intrigues while the pontiffs resided at Avignon; but it is only justice to add, that during the same period, the popes zealously laboured to restore peace between France and England. Their efforts indeed failed, for the French court, under the crafty Philip and his successor, the feeble John, was as deaf to the voice of wisdom, as it was regardless of honour: a long course of national suffering was necessary to correct the vices of princes. Even the peace of Brétigny (A.D. 1360) did not restore tranquillity to France; the military adventurers, from whom the cessation of the war had taken the pretext and the resource of plunder, formed themselves into companies, and ravaged the provinces; the French nobles, and even princes of the blood, assailed and plundered the merchants; John d'Artois, a near relation of the king, stormed and pillaged Peronne, and massacred the greater part of its inhabitants.

After having devastated the northern and western districts of France, the free companies directed their march towards Provence; pope Innocent fulminated excommunications against them without delaying their progress, or diminishing their number. They were rapidly approaching Avignon, resolved to make the wealth of the Church and the treasures of the cardinals their prey, when luckily for the pope, the marquis of Montferrat offered to take them into his service, and employ them against the Visconti, in

Italy. They did not however consent to resign their scheme of pillage, until they had extorted from Innocent a bribe of sixty thousand florins, and absolution for all their sins. Italy thus saved the south of France, but at a fatal cost, for the adventurers brought the plague into the peninsula.

On the death of Innocent, Urban VI. succeeded to the papacy (A.D. 1362). He forbade the marriage of the heiress of Flanders and Burgundy with the second son of Edward III., and thus prevented the irretrievable ruin of France. John in gratitude promised to lead a new crusade, at a time when he was neither able to defend his states, nor to pay the ransom stipulated for his freedom; but this folly of the French monarch produced no result; the age of crusading was past. Urban had to brave the avarice of Transamara, who offered to employ these bandits against his brother, Peter the Cruel, king of Castile; and Charles V., who had succeeded John on the throne of France, eagerly supported a scheme that promised to deliver his kingdom from devastation. But loose as were the morals of the time, it must strike every one with surprise to find Du Guesclin, regarded as the model of chivalry, taking the command of these plundering bands, and unscrupulously adopting their principles. He led the free companies to Avignon, to extort a bribe from the pope for their departure; and this too after Urban had generously contributed to pay his ransom, when he was taken prisoner at Auray. Urban V., after having vainly tried remonstrances and excommunications, was obliged to pay one hundred thousand florins, before the adventurers would turn from Avignon to their Spanish expedition. (A.D. 1367.) This disgrace induced Urban to adopt the advice of the emperor Charles IV. and visit Italy. The emperor followed with the professed design of crushing the Ghibelins; but his avarice prevailed over his courage: he accepted the large bribes proffered by the Visconti, sold a confirmation of their liberties to the free cities, and then repaired to Rome, trusting to his humility for a reconcilia-

tion with the pope. Urban obtained from the dishonoured emperor the celebrated Golden Bull, by which all the donations and privileges conceded by former emperors to the popes, were confirmed in their fullest extent; and when he entered Rome, he astonished and disgusted the citizens, by consenting to lead the pope's horse by the bridle.

Urban did not long remain in Italy; he felt himself insecure in the midst of turbulent republics and rival princes, and he quitted Rome, having gained by his journey only the empty honour of seeing the emperors of the West and the East at his feet. John Palæologus, whose dominions were limited to the suburbs of Constantinople, had come to claim the aid of the European princes against the Turks, and offered in return to effect a reconciliation between the Eastern and Western churches. The negotiation failed, Palæologus got neither money nor soldiers, but he returned home loaded with bulls and indulgences. Urban did not live to reach Avignon; he was succeeded by Gregory XI. (A.D. 1370), who was as much attached to the French interest as his predecessors.

Gregory's great object during his pontificate, was to crush the increasing spirit of liberty in Italy, which the popes had formerly encouraged as a counterpoise to the imperial power. The Florentines were the first to brave his wrath; they maintained a courageous struggle against the free companies which Gregory had taken into pay, and bore with heroic endurance the famine caused by the destruction of their harvests. But Italy then, as now, was incapable of receiving freedom; broken into petty states, with different interests, customs and prejudices, mutual jealousies prevented the growth of a national spirit, the only true source, the only sure support of freedom. Italian patriotism was limited by the walls of a city or the bounds of a province, and this disunion has been ever the source of servitude; there is no country in the world that has been so often and so easily conquered as Italy. The Romans seemed ena-

moured of slavery; they humbly besought Gregory to come and reside in "the eternal city," and sent a fanatic nun to persuade him by her pretended revelations, that the return of the popes to Rome would restore the church to the ancient plenitude of its power. Gregory was more terrified by the threat of electing an antipope than persuaded by the dreams of Catherine; the preaching of Wickliffe in England, and the progress of reformed doctrines in Germany, made him feel the dangers that would result from a schism in the church: he therefore disregarded the remonstrances of the French king, and set out for Italy, leaving a few cardinals at Avignon. He was received at Rome with loud acclamations, but in a few months the fickle populace became weary of its idol, and Gregory would probably have returned to Avignon, had he not been stricken by mortal disease. (A.D. 1378.) He foresaw the troubles that were likely to be occasioned by his death, and his last moments were spent in vain efforts to secure the peace of the church.

When the cardinals had assembled in conclave to elect a new pope, the citizens of Rome, knowing that most of them belonged to the French party, began to fear that a pope would be chosen who would transfer the papacy again to Avignon. To prevent this dreaded catastrophe, they assembled in arms, surrounded the Vatican, threatened destruction to all that opposed their wishes, and by their violence procured the election of a Neapolitan prelate, who took the title of Urban VI. But when the danger was passed, the electors repented of their choice, - especially as Urban threatened to create such a number of new cardinals as would quite destroy their influence. They assembled again at Anagni, and after long debates, elected a second pope; their choice now falling on a French prelate, who took the title of Clement VII. Thus commenced the great "schism of the West," which divided Europe for a quarter of a century. France, Spain, Navarre, Scotland, and some minor states, adhered to the French pope; Germany, Poland, Hungary, Flanders, and England

recognized Urban. The death of the emperor Charles, and the accession of his son Wincellaus, a luxurious barbarian, added fresh confusion to the complicated politics of Christendom; the adoption of the duke of Anjou, by Jane, queen of Naples, precipitated the war.

Charles Durazzo, being consecrated king of the Two Sicilies, advanced into the Neapolitan territories, overcame all opposition, and having made the guilty, but unfortunate, Jane prisoner, put her to death. The duke of Anjou, supported by the authority of Clement, soon appeared to contest this crown, and having passed the Alps, made himself master of some strong places in Apulia and Calabria. But the climate of Naples proved fatal to the invaders, and the duke of Anjou, having exhausted in this war the greater part of the French royal treasure, which he had seized by force, fell a victim to the pestilence. Durazzo, delivered from his rival, soon began to abate in his submission to the papal mandates, and Urban, on visiting Naples, was indignant to find his authority scorned. He removed to Nocera, where a conspiracy was formed against him, at the instigation of Durazzo, by six cardinals, who were weary of his tyranny. The plot was discovered, and the unfortunate cardinals were tortured on the rack, with the most savage cruelty. Urban then excommunicated the king and queen of Naples, the antipope Clement, and all their adherents. Durazzo immediately marched to Nocera, and stormed the town, but Urban sought refuge in the citadel, and from its windows repeated his excommunications thrice every day. He finally escaped by sea to Genoa, where he put five of the cardinals to death, sparing the sixth, who was an Englishman, only out of compliment to Richard II., who kept England faithful to the Roman pontiff. Charles Durazzo had in the mean time been chosen king of Hungary, but soon after his arrival in that country, he was murdered by the partisans of the queen dowager. The infant sons of Durazzo, and the duke of Anjou, were nominally placed at

the head of the rival parties that contended for the throne of Naples; but the former being deserted by Urban, soon proved the weaker in the strife. Urban's death did not abate the schism. (A. D. 1388.) The Italian cardinals elected in his stead another Neapolitan, who took the title of Boniface IX., and who began his reign by exchanging the most bitter bulls and excommunications with his rival at Avignon. A fresh opportunity of terminating the schism was offered by the death of Clement; but in spite of the remonstrances of the French clergy, the cardinals at Avignon elected Benedict XIII. and the divisions of the church became worse than ever.

Richard II., on the point of being hurled from his throne by the aspiring duke of Lancaster, had an interview with the unfortunate king of France, Charles VI., whose fits of lunacy were less injurious to his kingdom than his intervals of reason, and both remonstrated with the rival popes: even the degraded Wincellaus visited France to make an effort for terminating these distractions; but the hostile pontiffs eluded every demand, and spurned every solicitation. The empire was as much distracted as the church; John Huss, Professor of Theology in the University of Prague, was successfully spreading the doctrines of Wickliffe in Bohemia; the princes, animated by mutual jealousy, only agreed in their hatred of the emperor and their determination to dethrone him. Wincellaus was deposed, and the count Palatine Robert elected in his room; but many refused to acknowledge his title, and the dissidents contended with the imperialists both in Germany and Italy.

Innocent VII. (A.D. 1404) and Gregory XII. (A. D. 1406), were successively chosen by the Italians successors to Boniface IX.; these proceedings were regarded as a proof that the cardinals, from interested motives, designed to prolong the schism, and a strong feeling of disgust at their ambition began to prevail. A general assembly of

the French clergy refused obedience to either pope until the right to the pontificate had been determined by a general council. The cardinals of both parties were alarmed ; they assembled a council at Pisa, deposed both the rival popes, and elected Alexander V. (A. D. 1409) ; but as neither Gregory nor Benedict would resign their pretensions, the only result of the council was to divide the church between three popes instead of two. Alexander V. had scarcely time to condemn the doctrines of Wickliffe and Huss when he died in the eleventh month of his pontificate. Seventeen cardinals assembled at Bologna, and on the recommendation of Louis king of Naples, who had a powerful fleet in the neighbourhood, chose a Neapolitan cardinal, who took the title of John XXIII. The election of a prelate more remarkable for his martial spirit than his attachment to religion, spread great dissatisfaction through Christendom, which the new pope's conduct was far from abating.

Sigismond, the brother of Winceslaus, having been called to the empire by the almost unanimous voice of the German princes, bent all his efforts to the restoration of tranquillity, and prevailed upon pope John to assemble the celebrated council of Constance. (A. D. 1414.) But John was soon sorry for having given his assent, and would have retracted it, had he the power ; with great reluctance he proceeded to the place of meeting, and when he saw the city of Constance from the summit of the Alps, he pointed it out to his attendants, bitterly saying, " Behold the trap they have set to catch foxes." Nor were his suspicions unfounded : the council deposed the three popes, and wrung from John a reluctant assent to his degradation. Some days after he repented of his condescension, and, aided by the duke of Austria, made his escape into Switzerland. He was however unable to stem the torrent, and was finally compelled to acquiesce in the sentence.

John Huss and Jerome of Prague were summoned before the council, to give an account of their religious opinions ;

and justly dreading the bigotry of the German prelates, they took the precaution of obtaining a safe-conduct from the emperor. But the bishops persuaded Sigismond to violate his plighted word, and Huss was burned as an obstinate heretic. (A. D. 1415.) The emperor repented too late of his weakness, and reproached the council, but was informed that the Church in matters of faith had an authority superior to that of princes. Benedict of Avignon in the meantime obstinately refused to resign his pretensions to the papacy; Sigismond resolved to compel him to obedience, and visited the court of France, where he was magnificently received by the unfortunate Charles VI.; thence he passed into England, and showed his gratitude for the hospitality he had so recently received, by entering into alliance with Henry V. to dismember France, the English monarch bargaining for Normandy, and the emperor for the ancient kingdom of Arles.

Martin V. was elected to the papacy (A.D. 1416) with more solemnity than any of his predecessors. The Church and the empire, the princes and prelates of almost every Christian kingdom, had assisted at his consecration; and though the popes at Avignon maintained their nominal claims for thirteen years longer, the great schism was virtually terminated on the day of his election. But a power superior to that of the council of Constance had grown up during this long controversy, and had appealed to a judge, whose sovereignty became daily more established: that power was reason,—that judge, opinion. In Bohemia the Hussites took up arms to revenge the death of their great apostle; and, headed by the brave but sanguinary Zisca, overthrew the imperial forces in every engagement. When Zisca died of the plague, (A. D. 1424,) his undaunted followers used the skin of their deceased leader to cover a drum, that the sound might recal to the soldiers the memory of his valour and his glory. Animated by religious zeal, revenge, and patriotism, the

Hussites defeated the imperial and papal forces in eight pitched battles; nor did they consent to peace until they had extorted from the pope a full sanction of the principal reforms they had introduced into the doctrine and discipline of the Church. Nor was this the only or even the principal check given to the papal power; a council was held at Basil, (A. D. 1431,) in which the most exorbitant privileges claimed by the sovereign pontiffs were successively abolished. Pope Eugenius IV., who succeeded Martin, checked the progress of reform by removing the council to Italy, under the pretext of completing a union between the Greek and Roman Churches; but this proceeding occasioned a new schism, which lasted five years, and was near subverting the papal power altogether. The French nation, by the famous Pragmatic Sanction, the foundation of "the liberties of the Gallican church," (A. D. 1438,) adopted the decrees of the council of Basil; Germany followed in the same track at the diet of Mayence, (A. D. 1439,) and it was only by subsequent negotiations that the popes recovered a small portion of the privileges thus suddenly wrested from them.

The wars between the papacy and the empire were now at an end, and Germany gradually assumed a regular government and a fixed constitution. The Austrian line was restored in the person of Albert I. (A. D. 1438); the right of suffrage in the choice of an emperor was irrevocably united to the principalities subsequently called electorates; the partition of these principalities was prohibited, and their succession fixed according to the right of primogeniture. To prevent the evils of an interregnum it was arranged, that during a vacancy, the regency of the empire should be confided to the Palatine and Saxon electors. The great electoral families of Germany were thus permanently established, as they have since continued almost unaltered; except that the house of Hohenzollern, which originally

possessed only the electorate of Brandenburg, became subsequently, by the acquisition of Prussia, the most potent family in the north of Germany.

The wars between England and France, and the civil wars in both kingdoms, long prevented the establishment of a permanent government in either. But during the inglorious reign of Henry VI., the English were deprived of their possessions in France, principally by the enthusiasm with which the celebrated Maid of Orleans inspired the French army. A fierce struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster, in which the most powerful of the English nobility fell in the field or on the scaffold, was terminated by the battle of Bosworth Field, which placed the Tudor family on the throne of England. In Scotland the Stuart family steadily pursued the policy of breaking down the feudal power of the turbulent nobles, and thus prepared the way for the progress of civilization in a country that had been previously one of the most barbarous in Europe. Matrimonial alliances between the Tudors and the Stuarts diminished but did not wholly prevent the wars between northern and southern Britain, and finally led to the union of the whole island under a single sovereign, at the commencement of the seventeenth century.

The formation of the French government was for a season impeded by the great power of the dukes of Burgundy, rivals rather than vassals of the crown ; but Charles the Rash, the last and greatest of the Burgundian dukes, having madly attempted the subjugation of the Swiss cantons, was betrayed and slain at the battle of Nanci, (A.D. 1477,) and his states were thus left exposed to Louis XI. of France, the most unprincipled monarch that ever wore a crown. But though Louis XI. was a wicked and tyrannical ruler, his reign was on the whole beneficial to his country, for he re-established the royal authority, and secured to France the blessing of a settled government.

Italy during the fourteenth century was torn in sunder

by factions, and a prey to continual wars; it was the only part of Europe at the commencement of the fifteenth century in which there was no appearance of order rising out of confusion. The Lombard cities, after having wrested their liberties from the popes and emperors, knew not how to use the freedom they had won; anarchy was found more intolerable than despotism, and most of the republics either chose masters for themselves, or after a feeble resistance, submitted to usurpers. The most powerful of these princes were the Visconti, dukes of Milan, who were succeeded by the family of Sforza. (A. D. 1447.) A few republics however escaped the general calamity, of which the most remarkable were those of Florence, Genoa, and Venice.

Florence, like most of the Tuscan cities, had been formed into a republic at the close of the twelfth century. It soon assumed a democratic form, and was consequently a prey to factions. The evils resulting from civil commotion induced the Florentines to elect a magistrate called the "Gonfalonier of Justice," because he had the power of assembling all the citizens under his gonfalon or banner, and forcing them to make peace when all other modes of conciliation had failed. But Florence owed the preservation of its independence less to this institution than to the wealth derived from its commerce and manufactures, by which it was enabled to purchase the protection of kings and emperors. It retained its republican form of government until the middle of the sixteenth century, when the princely family of the Medici, supported by the emperor Charles V., usurped the government.

Genoa attained greater commercial eminence than Florence, but unfortunately its citizens were animated by a fatal spirit of mercantile jealousy, which involved them in hazardous and expensive wars. The Genoese and the Venetians contended for the monopoly of the commerce of the Levant, and the former, after a tedious naval war, were forced to leave their rivals masters of the sea. Still worse

were the factious disputes between the Genoese nobles and the citizens, which induced the latter to seek the protection of a master against the tyranny of an oligarchy. After many vicissitudes, Genoa became a dependency of the duchy of Milan, (A. D. 1464,) and though it subsequently asserted its freedom, it never regained its former greatness.

Venice, on the contrary, was continually advancing in greatness and glory; the republic had concluded a treaty with the Sultans of Egypt, by which it secured to itself the profits of the commerce between Europe and India. Its dominion extended over the provinces at each side of the northern Adriatic; its fleets had no rival in the Mediterranean. But the discovery of America, and of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, diverted European commerce into other channels, and the tyranny of a profligate aristocracy, aided the loss of trade in completing the ruin of a city that once deserved the proud name of "Rome of the Ocean."

The revolutions in Naples connect Italy with the history of Spain, where the kings of Castile were extending their conquests over the Mohammedans, while those of Arragon were adding to their dominions the islands of the Mediterranean. After a long struggle, the kings of Arragon drove the house of Anjou from the kingdom of the two Sicilies, but the Anjevin claims, merging in the crown of France, were subsequently the source of calamitous wars. By the marriage of Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabella of Castile, (A.D. 1474,) these kingdoms were united, and Spain thenceforward took a leading place among the states of Europe. Portugal might have been added to Castile, and the whole peninsula united under one government, but for the national jealousy between the Castilians and Portuguese, which induced the latter to prefer an illegitimate branch of the royal family to that which by marriage had been united to the Castilian sovereigns. Civilization perhaps gained by the disunion, for in the fifteenth century, while the Spa-

niards pursued the discoveries opened to them by Columbus, the Portuguese as zealously followed the track of Vasco de Gama; the one opening America, and the other India, to the colonial and commercial enterprize of Europe.

These discoveries do not fall within the period comprehended in this history, but it must be remarked, that they were the consequence, rather than the cause of, the commercial spirit that was fast rising in western Europe. A league for mutual protection, similar to that which united the Lombard cities, had been formed by the great trading marts of Flanders, Holland, and northern Germany, under the name of the Hanseatic Confederation. At the close of the fourteenth, and during the first half of the fifteenth, century, this league was in its most flourishing condition; it monopolized the entire trade of the Baltic; the various natural productions of northern Europe were brought by its vessels to the great marts in Flanders, and there exchanged for the cloths of the Flemings, the silks of the Italians, and the Indian spices imported by the Venetians from the Levant. But many circumstances combined to destroy this confederation, which indeed could scarcely have been expected to outlast the anarchy that led to its formation. The wars and commotions in Flanders and Brabant, compelled many of the manufacturers to go into exile, and several of them were invited into England by Edward III. where they established the woollen manufacture. The exclusive privileges of the Hanseatic towns were gradually abolished by the northern sovereigns, when the Dutch and English began to cultivate the Baltic trade; city after city was gradually withdrawn from the league, until finally the cities of Lubeck, Hamburgh and Bremen, were left alone in the confederation.

Northern Europe had long been the theatre of desultory and sanguinary wars, and they scarcely formed a part of the European States-system, until the union of Calmar, when the crowns of Norway, Sweden and Denmark were joined

on the head of queen Margaret. (A. D. 1387.) This union was not permanent : the Swedes believing that the successors of Margaret showed too decided a preference for the Danes, chose an early opportunity of asserting their independence, which they finally succeeded in establishing.

Russia, during the whole of this period, groaned under the humiliating yoke of the Moguls and Tartars, from whose Khans the native princes were forced to beg a confirmation of their dignities. It was subjected to the scarcely less degrading yoke of ambitious ecclesiastics, most of whom came from the Byzantine empire, and employed the knowledge which they exclusively possessed, to enslave both princes and people. The metropolitan of Moscow, possessing fortified palaces, and numerous guards, lived in all the barbarous pomp of an Asiatic sovereign. When he appeared in a religious procession, the bridle of the ass on which he rode, was always held by the reigning monarch, and his consent was necessary to the validity of every important act of state. To complete the misery of the country, it was distracted by the wars of petty princes, and its western frontiers assailed by the Lithuanians and Poles.

Lithuania was one of the countries for whose conquest the order of the Teutonic knights was instituted ; but when its sovereign professed Christianity (A.D. 1252), it was erected into a kingdom by the pope. It never occupied a conspicuous place in European politics, and was finally lost in the kingdom of Poland. But the Teutonic chivalry at the beginning of the fifteenth century, seemed likely to constitute the most formidable power in northern Europe ; the knights possessed Prussia, Pomerania, Courland and Livonia. But the government of an order, or a company, must necessarily be oppressive and insecure ; the nobility in these countries felt severely the exclusive privileges claimed by the knights ; the towns revolted against their exactions ; the cultivators of the soil, deprived of the fruit of their labours, hoped that any change would be for the

better ; and under these circumstances the knights lost province after province, almost without a struggle, until they sank into utter insignificance.

Poland gained most of the provinces wrested from the Teutonic chivalry, and it would probably have become one of the most important states in Europe, but for the revolution which took place in the reign of Casimir the Great. (A.D. 1389.) That prince having no children was anxious that the crown should descend to his sister's son, prince Louis of Hungary, in prejudice to the claims of the princes of Silesia. The Polish nobles took advantage of this circumstance to render the crown elective, and to secure for themselves an exemption from all taxes and contributions to the support of the state. Contested elections, and aristocratic usurpations, rendered Poland feeble in itself and mischievous to its neighbours, until at length, almost within our own memory, its name was effaced from the map of Europe.

The Grecian empire, which in the fifteenth century sunk before the power of the Ottoman Turks, alone remains to be mentioned in this rapid survey of Christendom, but as its fate involves a consideration of the state of Asia, it must be examined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Foundation of the Ottoman, and Destruction of the Byzantine Empire.

(From A.D. 1224, to A.D. 1453.)

NUMEROUS as the revolutions in Asia have been, there is none that in magnitude, rapidity, and extensive consequence, can compare with that effected by Jenghiz Khan and his successors. The most furious race of conquerors that had

ever been sent as a scourge to mankind, in an incredibly short space of time became masters of all the countries between the Mediterranean and the Northern Pacific Ocean, subverting almost without an effort the ancient empire of China, the kingdoms of Khorazm, Ghazni, and Persia, the principalities of Armenia and Georgia, and the greater part of Modern Russia. Several Turkish tribes, driven forward by these invaders, entered Syria and Asia Minor, dispossessing the ancient inhabitants, whether Christian or Mohammedan, and acting towards them with the same cruelty as that which they had themselves experienced. Suliman Shah, a prince of Khorassan, at the head of fifty thousand Turks, was driven round the Caspian into Armenia, where his horde formed a kind of flying camp, waiting some favourable event that might favour their return home. (A. D. 1224.) After the death of Jenghiz Khan, Suliman, believing that he had some chance of recovering his ancient kingdom, led the horde along the line of the Euphrates; but having attempted to ford the river, he was unfortunately drowned, and his followers divided into separate parties under his four sons. The two elder sons continued their route to Khorassan, but Dundar and Ertoghzul, followed only by four hundred families, returned to Armenia, and fixed their residence in the valleys formed by the mountains east of Erzerúm. Ertoghzul was of a bold enterprising spirit, and he saw in the condition of western Asia, a fair opportunity of founding a dynasty. The sultanies into which the Seljukian kingdom had been divided, were harassing each other with mutual wars, and could not be persuaded to combine either against the Moguls or crusaders, and consequently a band of adventurous warriors might well entertain the hope of rising to fame and fortune in such a distracted country. Finding themselves straitened in their valleys, Dundar and Ertoghzul resolved to move westward; on their march they met two armies engaged in deadly combat, and Ertoghzul took

the chivalrous resolution of aiding the weaker party. His unexpected aid changed the fortune of the day ; the Moguls, who were on the eve of victory, were decisively overthrown, and the Seljukians of Iconium saved from utter ruin. Ertoghzul after the victory was rewarded by the Seljukian Sultan with the gift of a hilly but fertile district, that anciently formed the frontiers of Phrygia and Bithynia. He extended his dominions at the expence of the Greeks, and secured them by several victories over the Moguls.

Othman, the son of Ertoghzul, (born A. D. 1258,) succeeded his father at a mature age, and was enthusiastically hailed by his tribe, whose love and esteem he had already won by his youthful valour. He was fortunate in obtaining the friendship of prince Michael, a young Greek prince whom he accidentally made prisoner, and from whom he received valuable instruction in the art of government. Michael even embraced Islamism to gratify his friend : from him descended the family of Mikhal-ogli *, so conspicuous in the subsequent history of the Ottoman Empire. The instructions of Michael, the attachment of his subjects, and the influence he derived from his marriage with the daughter of Edebali, rendered Othman superior to his Seljukian rivals ; but the Turkish historians, in the true oriental taste, are not satisfied with so simple an explanation ; they attribute his success to a dream †, by which he was stimulated

* Sons of Michael.

† This celebrated vision, which every Turk learns by rote from his childhood, possesses too much historical importance to be omitted. It is only necessary to premise that Othman was at the time visiting Edebali, with whose daughter he was in love, but had been as yet unable to gain the sheikh's consent.

He dreamed that he was reposing on the same couch as his host. Suddenly the moon seemed to emerge from Edebali's bosom, and, after having attained wondrous size and splendour, to enter his own breast. Instantly there sprang from his loins an immense tree rapidly acquiring fresh size and foliage, until its spreading branches shaded Europe, Asia, and Africa. Beneath this tree the mountains of Caucasus,

to exert his energies and found a dynasty. His conquests were made slowly, because his forces were not numerous, but he retained every thing he acquired, and gradually consolidated a kingdom. At the close of his reign, he won a metropolis for his new power; Prusa, the capital of Bithynia, was surrendered to him without a blow, and was immediately chosen for the seat of his government. Having won a tomb worthy of his fame, and a residence for his successors, Othman died in the seventieth year of his age, (A. D. 1326,) bequeathing his dominions to his son Orkhan.

The first proceedings of Orkhan after his accession, are

Atlas, Taurus, and Hæmus, raised their snowy summits, and seemed to be the four columns that supported this leafy tent. From the roots of the tree sprang the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Nile, and the Danube, whose waters were almost hidden by forests of masts. Yellow harvests covered the plains, waving woods crowned the hills and mountains, countless rivulets meandered through groves and gardens. Through the vistas of the valleys were seen cities, adorned with domes, cupolas, towers, obelisks, and columns. The crescent gleamed on every spire, and from every minaret was heard the voice of the Muezzin, summoning the faithful to prayer; the sound mingling with the notes of countless nightingales, and the chatterings of millions of parrots, whose gay plumage exhibited all the colours of the rainbow. These birds sported gaily through the immense mass of foliage, and seemed not to fear the leaves, though they were long, pointed, and glittering like sabres. Suddenly a wind arose, and directed the points of all these sabre-like leaves towards the principal cities of the universe, but especially towards Constantinople, which, placed at the junction of two seas and two continents, resembled a noble diamond set between two sapphire stones and two emeralds, forming the precious jewel of the ring of a vast dominion that circled the entire world: a ring destined to grace the finger of Othman as soon as he woke.

A century and a half elapsed between this dream and its fulfilment. Another century and a half saw the Ottoman empire towering in its pride of place; but at the end of that time a second vision became necessary to predict a sad change, and now neither dream nor vision is wanting to foreshow, that the house of Othman is hurrying to the fate of the houses of Abbas, Seljuk, Jenghiz, and Timúr.

so unlike the usual conduct of oriental sovereigns, that they deserve to be had in perpetual remembrance ; he offered to share his dominions with his brother Aladin, and when that prince declared his determination not to disturb his father's arrangements, Orkhan conferred on him the post of vizier. His fraternal affection met a due reward ; Aladin, who had studied deeply the laws and manners of the nations by which he was surrounded, strengthened the Ottoman empire by useful laws and institutions, superior to any that had been yet introduced into any Mohammedan country. One of these was, a standing army composed entirely of young Christian slaves to embrace Islamism ; they were named the "Yeni-Sheri," or "new troops," a name which European historians have changed into Janissaries. The beneficial effects of these institutions were soon felt ; the Greeks were unable to compete with the trained battalions of the Janissaries, and lost the important cities of Nice, Abydus, and Nicomedia (A.D. 1329).

The restoration of the Byzantine emperors to their throne at Constantinople had not changed the character of the princes or the people. Treachery, usurpation, and secret murders polluted the palace, bigotry ruled the church, and the nation was proverbial for cowardice and profligacy. The attempt of Michael Palæologus to effect a reconciliation with the Western Churches had exasperated the fanatical clergy, and his death alone prevented a rebellion. His son Andronicus refused to acknowledge the papal supremacy, and was for a time the favourite of his subjects on account of his attachment to the national worship. Unfortunately he took into his service a body of Catalans, dissolute military adventurers, that had been engaged in the Neapolitan wars, as he distrusted his own subjects. The Catalans revolted, and invited the Turks to their aid, who now for the first time appeared in Europe (A.D. 1292). An imperial army was routed by the united forces of the plundering adventurers, and the whole empire was exposed to their ravages.

Scarcely had this evil been removed, when the emperor was dethroned by his grandson, the younger Andronicus, under whose dissolute sway the provinces of Asia were abandoned to Orkhan. Once only the emperor tried to check the progress of the enemy, but he was defeated by the superior discipline of the Janissaries, and returned to Constantinople, where he soon after died (A. D. 1341). The empire was then usurped by Cantacuzenus, who entered into a strict alliance with Orkhan.

It was during this time of peace that the Turks first established a permanent garrison in Europe. Soliman Paçha, the son of Orkhan, had been appointed by his father governor of the newly acquired province of Mysia. The most celebrated spot in that province was the peninsula, on which once the ancient and opulent city of Cyzicus flourished. "Its broken columns," says an oriental historian, "its marbles scattered over the turf, reminded the spectator of the miraculous palaces that the evil genii had erected at the command of Solomon for Balkis, queen of Sheba, and of the wondrous remains of Tadmor * and Istakhar †." Soliman loved to linger among the ruins of a city that had long been the "Tyre of the Propontis," and probably estimating from their magnitude the riches of Constantinople ‡, he re-

* Palmyra.

† Persepolis.

‡ The Turkish historians say that the vision of Othman was repeated to Soliman; the tale is thus told by Saad-ed-din.

One evening as he sat wrapped in contemplation by the sea shore, he beheld the pillars and porticoes reflected by the light of the moon, in the tranquil waves of the sea of Marmora; while the light clouds that flitted over the sky seemed also to float over the water. It appeared to him as if the restored city was emerging from the sea in its former beauty and girdled by its ancient fleet. Mysterious voices seemed borne to his ear by the whispering winds and murmuring waves; whilst the moon beaming from the east, seemed to unite Europe and Asia by a zone of silver. The planet wore the same appearance as when it rose from the bosom of Edebalj to enter the breast of Othman. The

solved to seize on some place in Europe, which would facilitate his attack on that city. He sent a detachment to seize the castle of Tzympus, to which he soon after added the city of Gallipoli and several strong fortresses in its neighbourhood (A.D. 1357). Soliman made Gallipoli the place of his residence, but in the midst of his career he was killed by a fall from his horse. Morad, or Amurath, as he is more frequently called, inherited his brother's conquests and his ambition.

Cantacuzenus being forced to resign the Byzantine throne, to John Palæologus, the rightful heir, retired into a monastery. John had neither the vigour nor courage necessary to protect the empire, and during his reign the Turks made a rapid progress in Europe. At length Morad captured the important city of Adrianople, and made it the capital of his empire. The news of this event spread dismay through Christendom, and after much precious time had been wasted, the Servians, Hungarians, and Wallachians, roused by a circular from pope Urban V., combined their forces to drive the Turks back to Asia. The allied armies advanced to Marizza, within two days march of Adrianople, but, confident in their numbers, they kept a careless watch, and were surprised in their camp by their active enemies. Many of the Christians fell by the hands of their brethren, others half naked were slain almost without resistance, and a great part of the remainder perished in the marshes through which they attempted to make their escape.

John Palæologus made no effort to recover the second city of his empire; he even sought the friendship of Morad, and became his vassal rather than his ally. The Turks strengthened their European empire by attacking the Servians, Wallachians, Bosnians, and some districts in

remembrance of his grandsire's vision, which had predicted universal empire, inflamed the courage of Soliman, and made him instantly resolve to remove his seat of government from Asia Minor into Europe.

northern Thrace, whose governors had thrown off their allegiance to the feeble court of Constantinople, and the Greeks rejoiced in the interval of tranquillity, without seeing that their ruin was delayed rather than averted. It was difficult to unite the half-civilized nations on the banks of the Danube against the common enemy; Lazarus prince of Servia at length prevailed on his neighbours to lend him their aid, and gained a brilliant victory over the Mohammedans. Alarmed by the success of the coalition, Morad assembled all his forces and marched against the allied army, which was encamped in the plains of Kossova, on the borders of Bosnia and Servia. The battle was one of the most sanguinary in which the Turks had yet been engaged; while it was raging most furiously, a Servian nobleman, Milosch Kohilovitsch, feigned to desert, and was brought into the presence of the sultan. Morad received him without suspicion; but while his attention was engaged by some feigned intelligence, Milosch sprang upon the sultan and mortally wounded him with his dagger. The assassin after a desperate struggle was cut down by the guards, and Morad, though exhausted by loss of blood, still continued to direct the movements of his army, and finally gained a decisive victory (A. D. 1390). He did not live to reap the fruits of his success; he bequeathed the empire to his son Bayezid, usually called Bajazet by western writers, and surnamed by the orientals Yildirim, or the Thunderer.

Bayezid at the very moment that the officers and soldiers hailed him sultan, in the presence of his father's bleeding body, gave orders for the murder of his brother Yaku'b, a prince whom his many virtues would have made a dangerous rival, quoting as an excuse for his crime this verse of the Koran, "Rebellion is worse than executions." He next ordered that the victory of Kossova should be followed up with all possible diligence, and in a few days Servia was completely conquered, its prince being permitted to retain his dominions only on the condition of tribute or vas-

salage. The family of the Palæologi in Constantinople presented a sad example of disunion and cruelty; Bayezid alternately patronized the different candidates for the degraded throne, and exacted implicit obedience as the price of protection. Philadelphia was the last city remaining to the Christians in Asia; Bayezid resolved to subdue it, and the Greek emperors and the prince of Servia not only sent contingents but came in person to join in the siege. Great was the astonishment of the Greek garrison when they beheld John Palæologus and his son Manuel in the hostile ranks; but far from being dismayed, they declared that they would not yield their walls while one stone remained upon another. But the walls had long been neglected; a practicable breach was soon made; and Bayezid ordered his Greek division to lead the assault. His orders were obeyed; the Byzantine emperors were the foremost in mounting the storm of their own city, and they actually received from the hands of the sultan, the prize usually given to those who take the lead in entering a breach! (A. D. 1391.) Bayezid himself was astonished at this excess of degradation, and he did not conceal his contempt for monarchs who were only brave when fighting against their own subjects.

John returned to Constantinople, leaving his son Manuel a hostage with the Turks. Deeply sensible of the disgrace he had incurred, and feeling that Bayezid was not conciliated by his subserviency, he began to fortify his city, which he knew would shortly be menaced. While thus engaged, he received a message from the sultan threatening that Manuel's eyes should be put out unless the works he had commenced were abandoned. The aged monarch reluctantly obeyed, and soon after died of grief. A secret messenger brought the intelligence of John's decease to Manuel: he baffled the vigilance of his guards and escaped to Constantinople, where he quietly took possession of the throne. But Bayezid regarding this as a defiance of his

authority, assembled a powerful army, invaded Thrace, took some of the most important fortresses, and commenced a close blockade of Constantinople, which lasted seven entire years.

Sigismond, king of Hungary, incited by the pope and aided by volunteers from France and Germany, the flower of Europe's chivalry, resolved to make a vigorous effort against the Turks; and crossing the Danube at the head of one hundred and thirty thousand men, laid siege to Nicopolis. The city was vigorously defended by the Turkish governor, who knew that Bayezid would promptly march to his aid. But whilst he was thus endeavouring to gain time, the allies, more especially the French, proud of their fancied superiority, abandoned themselves to luxury and debauchery, speaking contemptuously of the Turks that they came to fight, and the Hungarians they came to assist. "Should the sky fall," said some of these presumptuous chevaliers, "we would support it with the points of our lances." Full of this vain confidence, they neglected the most ordinary precautions; Bayezid had arrived within a few hours march of their camp, before they knew of his having abandoned the siege of Constantinople.

Sigismond made judicious arrangements for the combat, but they were frustrated by the impetuosity of the French cavalry. No sooner had the battle commenced than this rash but brave body made a furious charge, cut through the Turkish vanguard of light troops, and routed the Sipahis or Mussulman cavalry. Their commanders now besought them to halt and breathe their horses, but they hurried forward until they were suddenly stopped by the solid lines of the Janissaries, presenting to them a compact barrier of levelled spears. They halted, attempted to form, reeled in confusion, and were broken in a moment. The Sipahis, who had quickly rallied, now returned to the charge, terror took the place of confidence, and the French were thrown back upon the wings of the infantry. Treachery consummated

the ruin of the Christians ; the commanders of both wings fled without striking a blow, and the whole force of the Turks was directed against the centre, where the Bavarians and Styrians were posted. But the Christian centre, deserted and betrayed, valiantly maintained an unequal combat ; the Bavarians routed the Sipahis, and broke the squares of the Janissaries, when they were suddenly attacked in flank by Bayezid's Styrian auxiliaries, and cut to pieces (A. D. 1393). This decisive victory was won at such a cost that Bayezid ordered the prisoners to be massacred : about ten thousand had been slain, when the Turkish officers, weary of slaughter, besought the sultan to spare the remainder. Among those who were thus preserved from death were many of the principal nobles of France, who were subsequently redeemed on the payment of a large ransom. Manuel in the meantime resigned his throne to his nephew John, and proceeded to Western Europe, hoping that he might persuade the monarchs to unite for the common cause of Christendom.

John Palæologus II. endeavoured by compliance with every insulting request to purchase the forbearance of Bayezid ; he permitted him to erect a new mosque in Constantinople, and to establish a tribunal there for the protection of Mussulmans who might visit the city as merchants. But nothing short of the surrender of the city would satisfy the sultan ; when this was refused he renewed the blockade, while divisions of his army subdued northern Greece and the Morea. The fate of the Byzantine empire seemed inevitable, when a respite was afforded it by a new revolution in Asia.

Among the nations subdued by the Moguls one of the most warlike was the Jagatay Turks ; so important was this hardy tribe, that the government of it was confided to a son of Jenghiz Khan. From this prince, whose descendants, from frequent intermarriages, must be regarded as Turks rather than Moguls, sprang a young prince named Timúr,

that is, "iron," from the great strength he displayed in his infancy. While yet a youth he was lamed by an accident, whence he was called Timur Lenk, or "lame Timúr," a name commonly corrupted into Tamerlane. Scarcely had he attained the age of manhood when he liberated his country from the Mogul yoke, and entered on a career of conquest as rapid as that of his predecessor Jenghiz Khan. He subdued Khorazm, Khorassan, Persia, and northern India, and established a more permanent dynasty than that of the Moguls, for his descendants, after having ruled more than a century in Transoxiana and Persia, retained the empire of Delhi almost to our own days.

After the conquest of India, Timur advanced to the borders of Syria (A. D. 1400), where he was met by several Turkish princes, whom Bayezid had deprived of their dominions in Asia Minor. Timur sent a menacing letter to the sultan, threatening vengeance unless the fugitives were re-instated in their possessions; Bayezid insulted the ambassadors, and sent back a scornful reply. War was of course proclaimed. Timur, whose army was with him, immediately laid siege to Sievas, the ancient Sebaste, at that time the most flourishing city in western Asia. After a siege of eighteen days, Sievas capitulated, but the ferocious Timur violated his engagements, and put the greater part of the garrison to death by torture. Religious animosity exasperated the feud between Timur and Bayezid; the former was bigotedly attached to the faith of the Shütes, and declared that he was commissioned by God to punish the calamities that had befallen the family of Ali*. He made this the pretext for his cruelty at Sievas, and for his still more merciless treatment of Damascus, a city he levelled with the ground, leaving only one tower to stand as a monument of "the head of Syria."

Bayezid assembled all the forces of his empire to meet

* See page 136.

his formidable rival; when they had passed before him in review, he believed that no earthly power could compete with such numerous and well disciplined troops, and giving himself up to idle confidence, he cheated his soldiers of their pay, and as a remuneration, permitted them to plunder his subjects. There was treason in the sultan's camp, and there were revolts in the surrounding provinces, when he entered the plains of Angora, to raise the siege of the city from which they take their name. (A.D. 1402.) The battle began early in the morning, but from the very commencement its issue could not be doubted: whole battalions, levied by Bayezid in the dominions that he had wrested from their ancient princes, passed over to their old masters; the Servians and the Janissaries alone remained faithful, and by their desperate valour, protracted the combat until the shades of night had fallen. Finding all his hopes overthrown, Bayezid attempted to escape in the darkness, but he was unfortunately taken prisoner, with his principal attendants. At first he was treated with kindness by Timur, but having attempted to escape, he was strictly confined in a grated litter, which has given rise to the fable of his having been exhibited in an iron cage*.

* The story of the iron cage, is not, as has been asserted by many, a European invention; it is found in some of the best Turkish historians. Evliya Effendi, whose works are now being translated by the Ritter Von Hammer, at the expence of the Oriental Translation Committee, gives the following account of the transaction:—"Soon afterwards, Timúr-Leng, issuing from the land of Irán, with thirty-seven kings at his stirrup, claimed submission from Báyzid, who, with the spirit and courage of an emperor, refused to comply. Timúr therefore advanced, and encountered him with a countless army. Twelve thousand men of the Tátár light horse, and some thousands of the foot soldiers, who, by the bad councils of the vazir, had received no pay, went over to the enemy; notwithstanding which, Báyzid, urged on by his zeal, pressed forward with his small force, mounted on a sorry colt, and having entered the throng of Timúr's army, laid about him with his sword on all sides, so as to pile his foes in heaps all around him. At last, by God's will, his horse, that had never seen any action, fell under

The defeat of Bayezid was followed by the devastation of Asia Minor; Timur showed as little mercy to those who yielded as to those who resisted: a Sonnite Mussulman was almost as great an object of his hatred as a Christian, and his massacres of both were more relentless than those of any conqueror on record. At length, wearied with slaughter, he returned to Samarkand, leaving Syria and Asia Minor a prey to anarchy.

The four sons of Bayezid engaged in a long and sanguinary strife for his inheritance, but fortune finally decided in favour of Mohammed, the youngest, but also the most able of the family. (A.D. 1413.) His first care was to recover the ancient empire of the Ottomans in Asia, where every petty prince had rendered himself independent after the departure of Timur. The civil wars in central Asia, produced by the death of Timur, facilitated the progress of Mohammed; in the space of two years he regained the provinces that had belonged to his father, and even added to them several important districts. Having restored tranquillity to Asia Minor, he resolved to enlarge his European states by attacking Hungary; but Sigismond baffled the Turkish armies, and preserved his dominions secure.

him, and he, not being able to rise again before the Tatars rushed upon him, was taken prisoner, and carried into Timur's presence. Timur arose when he was brought in, and treated him with great respect. They then sat down on the same carpet together, to eat honey and clouted cream. While thus conversing together, 'I thank God,' said Timur, 'for having delivered thee into my hand, and enabled me to eat and discourse with thee at the same table; but if I had fallen into thy hands, what wouldst thou have done?' Yildirim (Bajazet) from the openness of his heart, came to the point at once, and said, 'By heaven! if thou hadst fallen into my hands, I would have shut thee up in an iron cage, and would never have taken thee out of it till the day of thy death!'—'What thou lovest in thy heart, I love in mine,' replied Timur; and ordering an iron cage to be brought, forthwith ordered Bayazid to be shut up in it. . . . By God's will, Yildirim died that very night of a burning fever, in the cage in which he was confined."

An insurrection of the dervishes, or monastic orders, for a time threatened the sultan's safety ; it was suppressed with some difficulty ; its leaders, among whom were found several of the most skilful generals and statesmen, were executed ; their deaths greatly weakened the Turkish empire. Soon after, Mohammed having occasion to visit Asia, expressed a wish to pass through Constantinople ; the emperor Manuel was as eager to gratify his desires, so that the arrangements for an interview between the two sovereigns were easily made. The sultan was highly gratified by the entertainment he received, and during the remainder of his life, took every opportunity of showing his regard for the Byzantine emperor.

Mohammed died suddenly of apoplexy (A. D. 1421), while his son was engaged in war at a distant extremity of the empire, but the viziers concealed his death until Morad, or Amurath II., had time to secure his peaceful succession. Manuel, hoping to raise a civil war among the Turks, liberated a rival claimant of the throne, Mustapha, the son of Bayezid, whom he had detained in prison during the reign of Mohammed, and aided him with an army. Mustapha was more successful than could have been anticipated : the Janissaries, stationed in Europe, revolted to him ; Adrianople opened its gates ; and a few fortresses on the Bosphorus alone remained faithful to Morad. Success corrupted a mind weakened by long imprisonment ; Mustapha broke his engagements to Manuel, dismissed his Greek auxiliaries, and began to indulge in profligate debauchery. He passed over into Asia, and hastened to meet Morad, but he was deserted by the Janissaries with the same suddenness that they had joined him, and forced to return to Europe a helpless fugitive. The Genoese, who were in alliance with Morad, lent him a fleet to transport his army across the Bosphorus, and the city of Gallipoli was taken by the allies with little difficulty. Adrianople, that had so recently welcomed Mustapha, now spurned him from its

walls, and those who had been the most humble flatterers of the unfortunate prince betrayed him to his rival.

Morad, after having put Mustapha to death, prepared to punish Manuel's breach of treaty, and marched with all his forces against Constantinople. After a short siege, the Turks made a desperate effort to take the city by assault, but they encountered an equally desperate resistance; the soldiers of the garrison were aided in their defence by the citizens, the ministers of religion, the judges of the law, and even by the women and children; it was a battle in which the Greeks, for the first time after the lapse of ages, fought with the courage worthy of their brave forefathers. The baffled Turks at length withdrew to their camp, and Morad having received intelligence of a formidable insurrection in Asia, raised the siege. The wars in the East engaged his entire attention, and in order to pursue his conquests, he made peace with the European powers. Venice however was excepted from the general pacification, for the sultan was anxious to become master of Thessalonica, which had been recently occupied by the forces of that republic.

The Venetians, undaunted by the great preparations which the sultan was making, prepared for a vigorous defence; but, a few days before the siege commenced, an earthquake broke down a portion of the walls of Thessalonica (A. D. 1430). Before the breaches could be repaired, Morad, with an immense army, appeared before the city; the Greeks could not be persuaded to aid in the defence, and the Venetian garrison was scarcely sufficient to man the extensive battlements. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the Venetians made a brave resistance; but the sultan was prodigal of men, the Turks mounted over the bodies of their slain companions, and the breach was won. Then began all the horrors that follow the capture of a city by storm; the Greeks were the principal sufferers, most of the Venetians having cut their way to their galleys in the port. It would be painful to dwell on this scene of misery;

suffice it to say, that death or slavery was the fate of young and old, male and female, in the devoted city.

The fate of the Grecian empire was delayed by the valour of John Hunniades, a Hungarian general, whose gallant conduct became the admiration of Christendom ; crowds of volunteers flocked to his standard from Germany and Poland, and he invaded the Turkish territories with an army more numerous and better disciplined than that which had engaged in the unfortunate campaign of Nicopolis. Victorious in every battle, he at length forced the passes of the Balkan, and overthrew the sultan in person. Morad instantly offered peace, which Hunniades prudently accepted, (A.D. 1444,) and the Turks, for the first time since Othman had founded their empire, were forced to recede from their conquests.

Morad, though only in his fortieth year, became weary of the cares of government, and resigned the crown to his son Mohammed II. But he was soon recalled from retirement by the perfidy of the Hungarians, who had broken the recent treaty at the instigation of the papal legate. John Palæologus, the son and successor of Manuel, joined in the alliance against the Turks ; and an Italian fleet in the Hellespont encouraged many of the minor princes to revolt. Hunniades, against his better judgment, was induced to join in the war by the proffer of the crown of Bulgaria ; he entered the Turkish territories, and after taking some places of minor importance, laid siege to Varna. Morad, with a powerful army, hastened over from Asia to raise the siege ; a battle was fought, in which the Christians were completely routed, the king of Hungary slain, and Hunniades disgraced by the precipitation with which he fled from the field.

Morad again resigned the throne, but was forced to resume his power, as his subjects were unwilling to submit to the youthful Mohammed. Southern Greece had thrown off the yoke ; Albania had risen in insurrection under

George Castriot, better known by the name of Scanderbeg, (the prince Alexander), given to him by the Turks, and Hunniades, anxious to recover his fame, had crossed the frontiers, and entrenched himself at Kossova. A single campaign sufficed for the recovery of the Peloponnesus, and Morad hastened to meet the Hungarians in the field, where his ancestor and namesake Morad I. had fallen by an assassin in the moment of victory. Hunniades, instead of waiting for the reinforcements promised him by Scanderbeg, quitted his camp, and met Morad in the open field (A.D. 1448). The battle lasted three days: on the two first the Christians had the advantage, but on the third, the Wallachians deserted in a body to the Turks, and Hunniades, stunned by the unexpected event, was completely defeated.

Thus far Morad had triumphed, but he had to maintain a mere doubtful contest against the celebrated prince of Albania. George Castriot, the son of John prince of Epirus, had been spared on account of his youth and beauty, when his father and brothers were treacherously murdered by the Turks. Educated a Mussulman, he entered the Janissaries, and became so distinguished by his prowess, that at the age of nineteen he had gained the rank of general and the government of a province. But patriotism and revenge equally urged him to deliver his country; he obtained by force from Morad's Reis Effendi an order to the governor of Croia, the capital of his paternal principality, to surrender the city, and quitting the Turkish camp with a few faithful followers, he made his way over the Thracian and Epirote mountains to Croia. His artifice succeeded, the governor at sight of the order gave him the keys of the city, and Scanderbeg on the same evening, admitted his followers and destroyed the Turkish garrison. (A. D. 1448.) The Albanians and Epirotes imitated his conduct, the Turks were every where exterminated, the independence of the principality restored, and

the power of the sultan defied. Protected by the rocks and mountains of Epirus, supported by his hardy countrymen, Scanderbeg, for more than a quarter of a century, maintained his country's liberties and defeated the immense armies sent against him. The subjugation of Epirus was not effected until after his death, (A. D. 1466,) and when the Turks conquered the city in which he had been interred they made talismans of his bones, believing that they might thus be made partakers of his valour and good fortune.

John Palæologus, in order to conciliate the western princes, tried to form a union between the Greek and Roman churches, but he met with so much vexatious opposition from the clergy and people, that his spirit, already broken by repeated misfortunes, sank under the weight of sorrow and disappointment. (A. D. 1448.) He was succeeded by Constantine Palæologus, a prince eminent for virtue, but who unfortunately wanted firmness to control his turbulent and demoralized subjects. Morad died soon after, (A. D. 1451,) and was succeeded by Mohammed II., whose first act of sovereignty was the murder of his infant brother. From the moment that he ascended the throne, the young sultan firmly resolved on conquering Constantinople, the possession of which ever since the days of the prophet, had been the great object of Moslem ambition. His first overt act of hostility was the erection of a fort on the European side of the Bosphorus, which commanded the entrance into the Euxine sea. Constantine wished to resent this aggression by immediate war, but the cowardly Greeks would not follow him to the field. He next sent soldiers to ravage the Byzantine territories, and when the Greeks repulsed the plunderers, he pretended to regard them as aggressors, and issued a declaration of war*.

The preparations for the siege of Constantinople were

* This is the account furnished by Ducas, and adopted by Gibbon,

made on a scale of unprecedented magnitude; cannons, then just beginning to be used in war, were cast of a size that has never since been equalled; volunteers were enlisted in every Mohammedan country, a powerful navy was launched, and immense magazines formed. Countless dervises and mollahs accompanied the hordes that came to enlist under Mohammed's banners; they raised the enthusiasm of the soldiers by circulating pretended prophecies of the establishment of Islam in *the city*, or, as they expressed it, in Stamboul*. One of them declared that the Sheikh Ayúb, who had fallen during a former siege of Constantinople, had appeared to him in a dream, and pointed out the place of his interment, and the "invention" of the grave was as efficacious as that of the Holy Lance at the siege of Antioch†.

In the mean time Constantinople was a scene of cowardly despair, disorder, and confusion. There was indeed a soul within the city illumined by a brighter radiance, and warmed by a holier fire, than the proudest heroes of Greece or Rome could boast; to the courage of a hero and the wisdom of a statesman, Constantine added the piety of a Christian. Apostacy, he knew, would save his life and

but Evliya, whose great grand-father was Mohammed's standard-bearer, gives, perhaps, a more probable relation:—

"According to the peace made by Yildirim, a tithe of the produce of all the vineyards round was to be paid to the sultan, before any of the infidels could gather a single grape. After the lapse of three years, some grapes having been gathered by the infidels, in violation of the articles of this treaty, in the vineyards of the Kúmili-hisár (the European castle on the canal of Constantinople), a quarrel ensued, in which some men were killed. Mohammed, when this was reported to him, considered it as a breach of the treaty, and immediately laid siege to Constantinople, with an army as numerous as the sand of the sea."

* A corruption of the Greek phrase *εἰς τὴν πόλιν*, "to the city:" it was also, by a kind of pun, called Islámbol, or the city of Islám.

† See page 333.

empire, but he counted both as nothing, compared with his duty to his country and his God. He stood as the last relic of a mighty empire, with the enthusiasm of a patriot, and the faith of a martyr; but he stood alone. In the common danger of Christendom, the emperor thought that the Greeks might be persuaded to forget minor differences, and coalesce with the Latins; but never was there a period when scholastic mysteries engendered such deadly strife. Predictions far different from those that spread through the Turkish camp were ripe in the devoted city; an old prophecy, it is said, had declared, that an enemy should enter in triumph through the golden gate*; another, with more truth, as events showed, declared that the gate Cercocomas should be the one through which free passage should be afforded to the destroyers. It was said that Morenus, a saint of a forgotten age, had pronounced the ruin of the city by an archer-people; and thousands repeated the tale that when Hunniades was weeping for his defeat at Kossowa, a hermit appeared to him and said, "the destruction of the Greek empire is a necessary preliminary to the salvation of Christendom."

Early in the spring (April 6, 1453,) Mohammed appeared before the city with an army amounting nearly to five hundred thousand men, and a train of artillery surpassing in number, size, and calibre any that war has since produced †. To resist such a force, Constantine could only prevail upon four thousand nine hundred of the degenerate Greeks, or

* The golden gate was consequently built up, and it still continues so, for the Turks had scarcely obtained possession of Constantinople, when they adopted its local superstitions.

† Evliya gives the following enumeration of the guns in the Turkish lines:

"They had five hundred pieces of ordnance at Seraglio Point, five hundred at the Lead Magazines (on the Galata side of the Gulf of Keras), and one hundred like a hedgehog's bristles, inside and outside of the Kiz-kulleh-si (Tower of Leander), so that not a bird could fly across the sea."

Romans, as they vauntingly called themselves—to enrol themselves for the defence of the city; he was aided however by two thousand warriors from western Europe, under the command of John Justiniani, a noble Genoese.

Closely as Mohammed kept the city blockaded, five French ships forced an entrance into the harbour, and brought a temporary relief to the besieged. This unexpected event convinced the sultan that while the sea was open, his chances of success must be very uncertain; and he devised, and put into execution, one of the boldest designs we find mentioned in history. He levelled a road from the Bosphorus, behind Pera, to the haven of Constantinople, and brought eighty galleys overland into the harbour, a distance somewhat more than eight miles *.

* Evliya gives the following account of this extraordinary transaction:

“The sultan ordered Timúz-tash Páshá to employ two thousand soldiers in constructing fifty galleys, in the valley, near Kágged-khánéh (a village on the Bosphorus); and some villages were plundered to provide them with planks and other timber for that purpose. Kójah Mustafá Páshá had previously constructed, by the labour of his Arab troops, fifty galleys and horse-boats, at a place called Levend Chiftlik, opposite to the Ok-meidán (Archery ground). The galleys built at Kágged-khánéh being also ready on the tenth day, the sultan went on that day to the Ok-meidán, with some thousands of chosen men, carrying greased levers and beams, to move the said ships. By the command of God the wind blew very favourably; all sails were unfurled; and amidst the shouts of Moslems crying ‘Allah! Allah!’ and joyful discharges of muskets and artillery, the ships slid down from the Ok-meidán into the harbour. The terrified Káfirs (infidels) cried out, ‘What can this be?’ And this wonderful sight was the talk of the whole city. The place where these ships were launched is still shown at the back of the gardens of the arsenal, at the stairs of Sháh-kulí, within the Ok-meidán. The millet which was scattered there under the ships (in order to make them slide down more easily) grew, and is to this day growing in that place. All the victorious Moslems went on board, armed cap-á-pie, and waited till the ships built by the Timúr-tash, at Kágged-khánéh, made their appearance at Izzúb (near the extremity of the harbour), in full sail with a favour-

The fate of Constantinople was now manifestly inevitable; Constantine offered to accept any terms consistent with religion and royalty; but the Turk had taken his final resolution, that the city should contain his throne or his grave. Having consulted the astrologers, in whom he reposed great confidence, Mohammed fixed the 29th day of May, for the final assault; and the announcement of his design filled the Turkish camp with enthusiastic delight. The Greek historian Ducas informs us that "Towards evening, messengers were sent through all the camp, ordering a general illumination. When the lights were kindled, they raised impious shouts, repeating the symbols of their accursed creed. The lamps and torches were so numerous, that they gave a brighter light than that of the sun, illuminating the whole city, Galata, the harbour, the shipping, and even the vessels at anchor beyond Scutari; the surface of the sea shone like molten gold; and would to heaven! that the flames had been not simply shining, but also consuming the tyrant's fleet and camp. The Romans (Greeks) believing that the Turkish tents had taken fire, ran as far as the ruins of the wall to see the event; and, from the shouts and dances of the barbarians, easily conjectured the cause of the illumination."

The last night of his life and his empire was spent by Constantine in a manner that well became a monarch, a hero, and a Christian. He summoned round him the chief of his officers, and addressed them in a speech equally remarkable for its powerful appeals to patriotic feelings, and for the pious submission to the divine will, which it every where manifests. A report of it is preserved by

able wind. They soon joined the fleet from *Ok-meidán*, amid the discharge of guns and cannons, and shouts of '*Hoi! Hoi!*' and '*Allah! Allah!*' When the Kaffrs saw the illustrious fleet, filled with victorious Moslems, approach, they absolutely lost their senses, and began to manifest their impotence and distress. Their condition was aptly expressed in that text (Koran ii. 18), 'They put their fingers in their ears, because of the noise of the thunder, from the fear of death.' "

Phranza, who was present, and though he probably has altered the language, he has preserved the sentiments. It appears exactly such a speech as would be delivered by one desirous to inspire others with hopes that he felt not himself, and anxious to discharge punctually his last temporal duties, before his passage into eternity. From the council-chamber Constantine passed to the assembly of the citizens, where he eagerly inquired, whether there were any present who could complain of having received an injury from him, that he might ask pardon. Tears and sobs were his only reply. Even in this hour of distress, almost of despair, the sovereign drew consolation from the knowledge that he was the beloved of his people, and that he well deserved their love. From thence he proceeded, accompanied by a band of self-doomed martyrs, to the Church of Saint Sophia, where the Holy Sacrament was for the last time administered.

Nothing can be imagined more heart-rending than the sight of the emperor kneeling amid the tombs of illustrious ancestors, with whose ashes he knew that his own should never mingle, bowing before an altar whose gorgeous ornaments were soon to be desecrated, and attended by a crowd, whose love for the church of Saint Sophia was as strong as that which the Jews felt for their temple. "The emperor wept bitterly," says Phranza.—Doubtless he did:—who would not weep in reading the story? "But he rose from his knees with a calm countenance." The calmness was and could be only of that kind which "cometh from above." Ere midnight arrived, its last Christian congregation passed from beneath the dome of Saint Sophia, and Ichabod was written on "the giant pile."

The fatal morning arrived. No gun, as usual, from the Turkish camp, announced the break of day; but a sudden rush towards the walls at once aroused the garrison, and the work of death was begun. The engines of ancient and modern warfare united to deal destruction—cannon roared, catapult

hurled stones, bullets and arrows flew through the air. The Greek fire, like our modern rockets, darted athwart the sky, adding a new light to the day: the ships in the harbour joined the attack; sea, land, and sky bore a share in the fearful combat. Well and bravely did the Christians maintain their posts, especially the Imperial Guards and the Genoese auxiliaries. Constantine cheered his men by his voice and example; but as the tumult thickened round the walls, his influence became more and more contracted; each man fought for himself, and could not hear, much less heed, the words of exhortation.

The sun had risen upon the earth, and yet it was not day. Ramparts and walls were involved in clouds of smoke and dust, which the eye could not penetrate; but the Christians still maintained their ground. But now the trenches were choked with dead, and the heaps of Moslems piled beneath the wall, afforded ghastly means of ascent to the Janissaries, whom Mohammed led forward in person, after the Anatolian and Rumelian divisions of his troops were driven back. At this critical moment, Justiniani was severely wounded, and retired to seek medical aid; the Genoese, no longer encouraged by his presence, gave ground, and the Turks effected a lodgment on the outer wall*.

* Let us do justice to a brave and injured man. Gibbon, whose caprice is not the least stain on his great work, accuses in no very measured terms, Justiniani of cowardice, and ascribes to him the loss of the city. There is absolutely nothing to justify such a suspicion; for Phranza, on whose evidence the charge rests, was not present. Ducas does not even hint at the charge; and the Chian annalist, quoted as an additional authority, only blames the general for not remaining to die at his post. But the Turkish historians unanimously assert, that a portion of the Greeks, seized with sudden terror, submitted to the Turks, and consequently, that Grecian treachery, not Genoese cowardice, enabled the assailants to gain the wall. Ducas partially confirms this account, though love of country induces him to slur it over as lightly as possible.

Assuredly it required little prophetic skill to discover the certain

Borne backward in the press, Constantine made several vain efforts to rally his soldiers, but when he found that it was impossible to stem the torrent that poured through the breach, he exclaimed in agony, "Is there no Christian here whose sword will end this unfortunate life, and save me from the disgrace of falling by an infidel?" Deeming, however, that he might still have duties to perform, he threw aside the ensigns of royalty, and tried to extricate himself from the press. Where and how the Christian emperor fell is not known; his body was found on the following day beneath a pile of the dead, and received from the victors an honourable grave.

The scenes in the captured city are so vividly described by the contemporary historian, Ducas, that we shall quote his narrative.

"As fugitives from the walls ran, covered with dust and blood, through the streets, they were asked by the women what was the matter? When, in reply, they gave the fearful answer that the enemy were within the walls, the news was generally discredited, and reproaches were heaped upon the wretches as cowards and runaways; but when fresh

fate of Constantinople for half a century before its fall, and to find out that nothing but a miracle could save its degenerate citizens. It is, however, very singular that the Turks have inherited this prophecy in very nearly the same terms, believing that the Russians shall force a passage into Islámbol, and be victorious up to a certain point, when the prophet, or as some think, the angel Gabriel, shall interfere, and raise up a deliverer, by whom the Ottoman power shall be elevated to the highest pitch of glory. The chosen deliverer will be, according to the tradition, he whose heart did not fail at the crisis of greatest danger. It is from this superstition that the chief poignancy in the well-known sarcasm is derived:

"Thou who wouldst see this battlement
By Christian cannon piece-meal rent,
Nay, tamely view old Stamboul's wall
Before the dogs of Moscow fall,
Nor strike one stroke for life and death
Against the curse of Nazareth."

victims, covered with blood and dust, coming up, confirmed the tale, they perceived that the cup of servitude was brought to their lips. Then all the men, women, monks, and nuns, rushed towards the cathedral; fathers and mothers, leaving their houses desolate, speeded, with children in their arms, towards the holy sanctuary, so that the whole street leading to St. Sophia was thronged. But why did they thus rush to the cathedral? Many years before, they had heard from some false prophets, that Byzantium should fall before the Turks, and that these ruthless foes, breaking through the walls, should chase the Romans (Greeks) with great slaughter, as far as the pillar of Constantine; but that, when they reached that monument, an angel should descend from heaven who should give a drawn sword and the right of empire to a man previously obscure, sunk in wretchedness and abject poverty, who should be found standing by the pillar, addressing him in these words: 'Receive this sword, and avenge the people of God!' The impostors added, that the Turks should immediately turn their backs, and be driven, not only from the city, but from the regions of the west, from all Anatolia, and from their possessions in the east, as far as the town of Monodendrium in Persia. Believing in the truth of this prediction, multitudes fled into the cathedral, and invited others to follow."

The besiegers followed the deluded multitude to the gates of Saint Sophia, and we shall allow Ducas to describe the horrors that ensued.

"The Turks having reached the cathedral, cut down the gates with their axes, and then entered with drawn swords; and having cast a glance at the assembled multitude, proceeded to seize them separately as slaves, without encountering any resistance. Who can describe such ruin and calamity? Who can pourtray the lamentable exclamations and the wail of infants?—who the tears of mothers and the anguish of fathers? The Turk, with sacrilegious hand, seizes on every nun of delicate form or beautiful person; one car-

ries off his victim bound ; another, more powerful, snatches her away. The curling hair, the naked breast, the extended arms, offer fresh inducements to the plunderers. The mistress was bound with her servant ; the master with his purchased slave ; the priest with the porter at the gate ; young men were linked in the chain with virgins, on whose complexions the sun had never shone—whose faces their fathers had scarcely beheld ; and stripes were inflicted on their tender flesh if they dared to offer resistance. The space of an hour was sufficient for these robbers, the commissioned instruments of Divine vengeance, to bind the whole multitude—the men with ropes, the women with their own shawls and fillets. Then might be seen the long ranks of those chained together issuing from the temple and shrines, weeping and lamenting, while there was no one to pity their distress. Of the temple itself, what shall I say ? My tongue cleaves to my jaws—my soul sinks within me. Those dogs broke in pieces the sacred images, having first stripped off their precious ornaments ; they destroyed some of the lamps, and took others away ; in an instant they plundered completely all the treasures that were kept in the sanctuary, rich vases of gold and silver, vestments and precious ornaments : rendering the noble structure a desert. Then was fulfilled in the new Zion what God had spoken by the mouth of the prophet Amos : ‘ In the day that I shall visit the transgressions of Israel upon him, I will visit also the altars of Bethel, and the horns of the altar shall be cut off and fall to the ground. And I will smite the winter-house with the summer-house ; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the Lord.’ (iii. 14, 15.)* ‘ Though ye offer me burnt-offerings and meat-offerings, I will not accept them ; neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts. Take

* Ducas quotes from the Septuagint ; we have followed the English version.

thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.' (v. 22. 23.) 'The Lord said unto me, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not pass by them any more. And the songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God; there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence. Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail; saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn, and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat; making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit; that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in clear day; and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentations.' (viii. 4. 10.) It happened that the awful day on which the city was destroyed was the commemoration of St. Theodosius, at which solemnity a great crowd was assembled, and many men and women had kept the vigil of the feast; many also, in the morning, accompanying their husbands, in their best attire, suddenly fell into the snares of the Turks; for how could they imagine that the wrath of God could in an instant pervade the entire city? Those who have dwelt in it well know how vast its size."

Long before noon the Turks were masters of the entire city; but the sun was declining in the west ere massacre and plunder were, from very weariness, relinquished. Mohammed then entered the city in triumph, and proceeded to the palace. When he came within the marble precincts, soiled with gore and piled with dead, he was struck at the melancholy proof before him of the vicissitudes of human greatness, and repeated the well-known Persian distich:

"The spider hath woven his web in the palace of the Cæsars,
And the owl sung her watch-song on the towers of Afrasiab."

But Mohammed was a merciless victor; the emotion of pity soon passed from his mind, and he indulged his ferocious passions by the infliction of every insult which cruelty, avarice and licentiousness could dictate on the unfortunate citizens. On these abominations it would be painful to dwell, and we therefore gladly turn to examine the effects of the downfall of Constantinople on the nations of the west.

The exiles from Constantinople arrived in Italy, when the minds of men were just beginning to emancipate themselves from the thralldom of scholastic theology; and when the crimes of the Papacy, fast approaching the summit of their greatness, had driven men to enquire on what foundations the claims of the pontiffs rested. They brought with them the knowledge of the Greek language, and its study rapidly became popular with their hosts. It required no very deep study of the New Testament to discover that the ecclesiastical establishments which then over-shadowed Europe, and blighted every healthy plant that sprang beneath their shade, were directly inconsistent with the spirit and letter of the Gospel. The fall of Constantinople filled Christendom, but more especially eastern Germany, with terror. Mohammed, indeed, had opened for himself a passage into Italy, by the capture of Otranto; and but for his sudden death, might have occupied the ruined halls of the Cæsars, as well as the palaces of the Constantines, and placed the crescent on St. Peter's as on St. Sophia. The popes preached a new crusade; money was collected to subsidize troops; but the pontiffs used the treasures to enrich their families, to provide for their natural children, or to forward their schemes of ambition. Two years after Mohammed's death, the Turks might have been driven beyond the Hellespont—perhaps beyond the Euphrates, had Innocent VIII. been less avaricious, and the Venetians less influenced by commercial jealousy. Innocent did not even condescend to use the decent excuses of Sixtus; he pub-

liely recognised his natural children, and filled Italy with cruel wars by his efforts to carve out principalities for them. The establishment of the Turks in Europe brought shame and sorrow to every Christian country, and the blame being justly cast upon the rulers of the Church, there was consequently a growing disposition to scrutinize severely the origin of privileges profligately abused, and the source of an authority exercised, not for conservation, but destruction. An atrocious violation of the laws of hospitality, combined with impolicy, injustice, and a wanton sacrifice of the interests of Christendom, greatly increased the alienation of many powerful minds from the papacy. The crime was commenced by Innocent, and consummated by Alexander; it brought to them but slight and temporary advantage; it irretrievably ruined the character of pontifical power.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Social and Political condition of Europe in the Fifteenth century.

TOWARDS the close of the fifteenth century, a complete revolution changed at once the condition of society, and the political relations of states. This revolution was neither the result of force nor of wisdom; no great masses were put in motion to overturn established order, no great statesman arranged the combinations of profound policy to produce the mighty change; it was the result of a progressive advancement of intellect, accelerated by the almost simultaneous invention, or at least introduction from the East, of paper, of printing, of gunpowder and cannon, of an improved arithmetic, and of the mariner's compass. These great advances in knowledge extended the influence of literature and the arts, and prepared the way for salutary

innovations in habits, religion and government. Europe gradually threw off the yoke of barbarism, superstition, and fanaticism, imposed upon it by the revolutions of the fifth century, and the principal Christian states assumed nearly the same form that they have at present. Useful as these inventions were, their history is involved in great obscurity; our limits will not permit us to glance at, much less examine the countless controversies to which each has given rise, but in our brief account we shall fairly state our authorities, so as to enable inquirers to judge for themselves.

Before the invention of paper made from linen-rags, parchment was commonly used for copying books and for all public records; but as this was scarce and dear, cotton-paper was frequently purchased from the Arabs in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The use of cotton-paper was derived from the remote East; it was first made known to the Saracens when they conquered Samarcand, (A.D. 704.)* and soon afterwards a manufactory of paper was established at Mecca†. China was the country from whence the people of Samarcand derived their knowledge of paper, and in that country the art of manufacturing it was discovered more than two centuries before the Christian era‡. The use of linen was not general in Europe until the commencement of the thirteenth century; the similarity between linen and cotton stuffs must naturally have suggested the possibility of making paper from one as well as the other, and Germany, where most flax was grown and most linen made, was probably the parent of the invention. The oldest paper manufactory of which we have any certain account, was that established at Nuremberg§.

The invention of the art of printing is much more difficult to be determined, than that of manufacturing paper; pro-

* Abulfeda.

† Gaubil and Deguignes, Junr.

‡ Casiri.

§ Wehrs.

bably because it was a discovery made very gradually. From a very remote age, the Chinese practised the art of printing from solid blocks, like our modern stereotype plates*; and this art was introduced into Europe for the purpose of manufacturing playing cards. The designs of the cards were engraved on wood†, and impressions taken from the blocks nearly a century before the art of printing with moveable types was known. The card-makers soon began to cut pictures of the saints, and sketches of sacred history on the wooden blocks, which were readily purchased for the purpose of illuminating missals and other books of devotion‡. These wood engravings probably suggested to Gutenberg the invention of moveable wooden-types, which he certainly began to use at Strasburgh (A.D. 1436§). This was followed by the invention of type-founding, by Peter Schoeffer (A.D. 1456||), and of a press, at an unknown era. Gutenberg entered into partnership with John Fust or Faustus, a citizen of Mayence, who greatly improved the art, and in that age of superstition, was deemed a conjuror on account of his mechanical dexterity.

The manufacture of gunpowder, and its various applications to the art of war, were probably separate inventions, and much of the difficulty with which the origin of these inventions is surrounded, may be avoided by viewing them separately. The explosive force of nitre seems to have been known in India and China from the most remote ages, but the chief use made of it was in the manufacture of fireworks at public rejoicings and festivals¶. The Arabs learned the art in Samarcand, and Roger Bacon, a celebrated English monk, of the thirteenth century, who was deeply read in Saracenic literature, describes the composition of gunpowder with great accuracy**. The Arabs were the first to use cannon in Europe; the earliest account we have

* Deguignes and Klaproth.

† Fournier.

‡ De Murr.

§ Oberlin.

|| Daunon.

¶ Klaproth.

** Roger Bacon died A. D. 1294.

of these engines of war, describes them as being employed by the king of Grenada at the siege of Baza (A. D. 1342 *), but a century elapsed before they were brought to any thing like perfection. Guns and pistols were scarcely known before the beginning of the sixteenth century; old habits made warriors prefer the old implements of war, and for a long time the use of fire-arms was deemed sinful and disgraceful.

Recent researches have enabled us to trace the introduction of the Magnetic needle † into Europe with some accuracy. The attractive power of the load-stone was known to the naturalists of Greece and Rome, but its polarity certainly escaped their notice. It deserves to be noticed, that the earliest European accounts of the Magnetic needle, speak of it as something familiarly known, whence we may reasonably infer that it was practically known to sailors before it engaged the attention of the learned. The discovery of the magnet's polarity was made in China before the Christian era ‡; it was used for the construction of magnetic chariots, whose origin is lost in the obscurity of the mythological ages.

M. Klaproth has collected from Chinese authorities many curious anecdotes of the use made of these chariots; under the Tsin dynasty they formed a part of every royal procession. In the *Tsin-tchi*, or history of that dynasty, we find—

“ The wooden figure placed on the magnetic car resembled a genius wearing a dress made of feathers; whatever was the position of the car, the hand of the genius always pointed to the south. When the emperor went in state, one

* Cassiri.

† The first clear mention of the magnet's polarity, occurs in a Provençal Satire on the papacy, written by Guyot de Provins, about the year 1190.

‡ Klaproth. See also *Athenæum*, No. 369.

of these cars headed the procession, and served to indicate the cardinal points."

In the history of the second Tchao dynasty, which lasted from A.D. 319 to A.D. 351, we read,—

"The Chang-Fang (president of the board of works,) ordered Kiai Fei, who was distinguished by his great skill in constructing every kind of instrument, to build a number of magnetic chariots, which were sent as presents to the principal grandees of the empire."

The accompanying figure of one of these chariots is taken from the 33d volume of the Great Japanese Encyclopædia.



The figure in front of the chariot was made of some light material; it was fixed upon a pivot, and its finger invariably pointed to the south, which was the *kibleh* or sacred point of the Chinese, to which they always turned when performing their devotions. It is intimated rather obscurely, that these magnetic chariots were first invented for a religious

purpose, namely, to enable the devout to discover their *kibleh* when the sun and stars were obscured by clouds—a purpose to which the compass is frequently applied in the present day by Mohammedan nations; but there are very full descriptions of the use made of these chariots in directing the march of armies and guiding ambassadors.

There are several accounts of the manner in which the magnetic figures were constructed: as our readers have probably anticipated, a magnetized bar passed through the arm of the figure; and the only variety of ingenuity displayed by the architects was in balancing the figure upon its pivot.

The antiquity of these magnetic chariots is established incontrovertibly; the step from them to the compass is so very easy, that we may safely assert that the one must have led immediately to the other. The water-compass appears to have been the first used both in Asia and Europe: the mode in which it was used in the thirteenth century is very curious. It is thus described by Bailak, an Arabian author, who published his 'Merchant's Treasure' in the 681st year of the Hegira (A.D. 1282).

"The captains that navigate the Syrian sea, when the night is so dark that they cannot see a star by which they might determine the cardinal points, fill a vessel with water, and shelter it from the wind. Then they take a needle, which they stick into a splinter of wood, or a reed, in the form of a cross, and throw it upon the surface of the water. Afterwards they take a piece of loadstone, large enough to fill the hand, which they bring near the surface of the water, and they give the water a motion towards the right by stirring it, so that the needle begins to revolve. Then they suddenly withdraw their hands, and the needle certainly points north and south. I saw them do this with my own eyes, while voyaging from Tripoli, in Syria, to Alexandria, in the 640th year of the Hegira (A.D. 1242)."

We have tried this experiment with success, and can therefore confirm the accuracy of Bailak.

The revival of literature followed close on the great advance of the useful arts, but its progress was greatly accelerated by the overthrow of the Byzantine empire, which drove the most eminent scholars of Greece into exile. Protected by the most eminent Italian nobles, especially the Medici of Florence, they aided in preparing the great geniuses that flourished in Italy during the fifteenth century; and it was owing to their efforts and example that academies, or free societies, were formed for the cultivation of ancient literature at Rome, Naples, Venice, Milan, and Florence.

From Italy, the study of antiquity passed to the other states of western Europe, and soon spread its influence over every department of knowledge. The scholastic puerilities, which had hitherto prevailed in the universities, lost their credit; the eyes of men were open to the faults of the feudal system, and better forms of government were gradually introduced. But of still greater magnitude were the changes produced in commerce and navigation by the discovery of America, and of the passage to India round the Cape of Good Hope. The great impulse given to trade in western Europe, the establishment of distant colonies, the influx of mercantile wealth, led to the formation of a middle class of society, the true strength of nations.

The combination of so many improvements prepared the way for the reformation of religion. The abuses with which the Roman court was justly reproached, the excessive power and profligate lives of many of the principal clergy, had spread general disgust, and a strong conviction of the necessity of restoring Christianity to its pristine purity was diffused through Europe. The complete failure of the councils of Constance and Basil sufficiently proved that reform was not to be expected from the clerical body which

profited by abuses, and thus when Martin Luther began to preach against indulgences, the most glaring examples of clerical avarice and imposture, he obtained a ready hearing from a generation that had long expected and had long been prepared for a struggle against papal despotism.

Our rapid view of history began with the fifth and ends with the fifteenth century; the former era commences the revolution of destruction by which the old system of civilization was overthrown, the ten following centuries were a long and in most respects a gloomy period, during which the new and better system of civilization was formed; the great social and political change in the fifteenth century may be regarded as a conservative revolution, by which insurmountable barriers were raised against any future eruptions of barbarism, and security afforded for the continued progress of knowledge. The history of modern Europe begins with this conservative revolution, which has not yet reached its consummation, but which is still unfolding and determining the true elements of social happiness, a knowledge of and respect for the rights of nations and of individuals, whether rulers or subjects.

APPENDIX.

THE FEUDAL SYSTEM.

The barbarians who overthrew the Roman empire, and settled themselves in its finest provinces, seem not to have followed any regular plan in the distribution of the conquered lands. The Franks and Normans appear to have divided them into several portions, some of which were reserved to support the crown, and were called fiscal, others were bestowed in full property on the companions of the conquering monarch, and were named *allodia*. Lands held by allodial tenure were lands subject to no rent, charge, or service, except whatever taxes were required for the ordinary expences of government.

It is not very easy to trace all the causes that led to the change of allodial into feudal tenure; the two following appear to have been the principal: the king usually granted the profit of the fiscal lands as benefices to some of the great officers of his court; those who were proprietors by beneficiary investiture were obliged to give personal service in defence of the kingdom, when called on, and a breach of this condition led to the immediate forfeiture of the land. But benefices, though so far like fiefs, were different in one important respect; they were not hereditary, but on the death of every possessor reverted to the fisc, or in other words, were restored to the crown. The titles of nobility, before and during the reign of Charlemagne, were not mere names of honour, but expressed some functions of the state that should be performed by the pos-

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In consequence of this usurpation, nobility and benefices became hereditary nearly at the same time. The nobility found it necessary to secure themselves from mutual jealousy and avarice ; this could only be obtained by their having bands of armed and faithful followers, who would be ready at any time to defend the possessions of their lord by force of arms. For this purpose they let out the beneficiary lands to tenants holding under them, who were bound to the personal service of the proprietor, and received from him protection in turn.

The monarchs were by this change deprived of the greater part of their power, and the possessors of allodial lands lost all security : unconnected with government and with each other, they were exposed to every insult which the power and rapacity of the neighbouring barons dictated ; there was no law by which they could obtain redress, and they were too weak to attempt revenge. To secure protection they changed their tenure of property from allodial to feudal : either by actually surrendering their land to a neighbouring nobleman, and receiving it again on the condition of performing military service, or by confessing that they held it by a previous grant, and thus by a legal fiction establishing themselves as his vassals.

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the tenth century, this system was spread over France and Germany; in the early part of the eleventh it was introduced into England by William the Norman Conqueror.

A *fief*, or rather a *fiefment*, was a mutual contract; the proprietor gave land, and promised to secure its possession; the tenant, on the other hand, promised obedience to his lord, and was bound to serve him in all wars *, even against their mutual sovereign. The ceremonies in conferring a *fief* were, homage, fealty, and investiture.

† Homage was thus performed: the person who was about to become a vassal, came before the proprietor with his head uncovered, and without sword, belt, or spurs; kneeling down before his lord, he placed both his hands between the hands of the lord, and took an oath to be faithful, in consideration of the land held under him.

‡ Fealty, or fidelity, was the oath taken by the vassals; the

* This was not the case in England; William the Conqueror introduced, in this country, a clause into the vassal's oath, expressly reserving his allegiance to his sovereign.

† The form of homage is thus given in *Littleton's Tenures*: "When the tenant shall make homage to his lord, he shall be ungirt, and his head uncovered: and his lord shall sit, and the tenant shall kneel before him on both his knees, and hold his hands jointly together between the hands of his lord, and shall say thus: "*I become your man from this day forward of life and limb, and of earthly worship, and unto you shall be true and faithful, and bear to you faith for the tenements that I claim to hold of you, saving the faith that I owe unto our sovereign lord the king;*" and then the lord so sitting shall kiss him.

‡ The following is *Littleton's* account of fealty: "When a freeholder doth fealty to his lord, he shall hold his right hand upon a book, and say thus: *Know ye this, my lord, that I shall be faithful and true unto you, and faith to you shall bear for the lands which I claim to hold of you; and that I shall lawfully do to you the customs and services which I ought to do, at the terms assigned; so help me God and his saints;* and he shall kiss the book; but he shall not kneel when he maketh his fealty, nor shall make such humble reverence as is aforesaid in homage." From this it appears that tenure by homage was the more honourable, and tenure by fealty the more sacred compact. Homage could only be done to the suzerain: fealty might be done before his

terms were usually, that "he would serve his liege lord with life, limb; and worldly honour, faithfully and loyally, so long as he retained possession of the fief."

Investiture was the form of giving the vassal possession of the ground, and was either proper or improper. Investiture proper was an actual giving of possession, by taking the vassal to the very ground, and there making it over to him before witnesses; this, in the English law, is called *livery of seisin*. Investiture improper was symbolical, and consisted in giving the vassal a green sod, a wand or a branch of a tree, as a representation of the property conveyed to him.

The obligations of a vassal were, to keep his lord's counsel secret; to inform him of all plots against the life or honour of himself and family; to abstain from any thing that might injure him in person, property, or renown; and to serve him personally in war for a specified period. The usual term of feudal service was forty days; men over sixty, women, and ecclesiastics, were obliged to find substitutes: a breach of any of these conditions was punished by forfeiture of the fief.

Besides services in war, the lord derived other advantages from his vassals, which may be called feudal incidents: these were 1st, reliefs; 2d. alienations; 3d, aids; 4th, *cheate*; 5th, wardship; and, 6th. marriage; of which the two last were, in a great measure, peculiar to England.

Reliefs were sums of money due from every one of full age taking a fief by descent, and were paid to the lord as a species of renewal-fine for confirming the hereditary claim. They appear to have remained unsettled, arbitrary exactions, continually occasioning tyrannical demands on the part of the feudal suzerain, or superior lord, until they were settled by Magna Charta, at a sum not exceeding one-fourth of the annual value of the fief.

Alienation was a fine paid by the vassal for liberty to sell his interest in the fief to another. The customs of alienation varied in different countries; the laws prohibiting it, commonly called

deputy. Finally, none but free men could do homage; but the villeins, or serfs, might be called on to perform fealty.

the laws of entail, were very strict in England, and still more so in Scotland; where they still exist in much of their former rigour.

Aids were arbitrary exactions required by the suzerain when he was about to engage in any expensive undertaking; such as to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land; to become a crusader; to marry a daughter, &c. They were a great source of oppression, but by Magna Charta the occasions on which they could be claimed were limited to three: viz. when the lord's eldest son was to be made a knight; when his eldest daughter was about to be married; and when it was necessary to ransom the lord from captivity.

Escheats were either partial or total forfeitures of the fief, which then reverted to the suzerain. Escheats occurred either through default of heirs, for vassals had not the power of conveying away their fiefs by will, or by some breach of the allegiance due from the vassal to his suzerain. The law of escheats varied in different countries; in England, in consequence of the introduction of the custom, *corruption of blood*, it was the harshest of any form, since the forfeiture extended not only to the guilty person, but to his heirs.

Wardship was the right claimed by the suzerain to become the guardian of his vassals during their minority, and in that capacity to enjoy the profits of their estates until they came of age. As the feudal superiority of the English monarchs was greater than that of any other European monarchs, we find that wardship was considered a prerogative of the crown; and it continued to be exercised even in the time of the Stuarts, until it and other feudal abuses were abolished by the 12th Charles II.

Marriage; this privilege of the suzerain principally existed in England and Scotland. As land was granted on the condition of military service, which a female could not perform, the feudal lord claimed the right of bestowing the heiress of a fief in marriage to some person of his selection; forfeiture of the fief was the consequence of a refusal. This feudal incident gave rise to many calamitous scenes, and was one of the greatest blots on the system.

Besides the lords and vassals, there was a third class, which included the lower orders of society, called villeins. These were

actual slaves, and for the most part *gleba ascripti*, or bound to the soil. They could neither acquire nor inherit property, their lord was absolute master over their labour, their property, and in some cases even their lives. The condition of villeins appears to have been better in England than on the continent, more facilities were afforded for their emancipation, and more protection given them against oppression. This species of servitude gradually disappeared as civilization advanced, though we find some traces of its existence so late as the reign of queen Elizabeth.

The advantages and disadvantages of the feudal system have been frequently made the subject of fierce discussion, but in general, debaters have omitted the most important consideration on which the correct decision depends; they have usually put time out of the question. A little attention will show us that this system was fraught with utility at the time of its institution, but that in the present day it would be found cumbrous and oppressive. The decline of the Roman empire was the period of Europe's greatest demoralization; amid the crime and profligacy which every where prevailed, the vices of treachery, falsehood, and ingratitude, are pre-eminently distinguished. For these a corrective was found in the feudal system; its very essence was fidelity and honourable obligation; chivalry, the offspring of feudalism, inculcated high principles of honour and veracity; but the greatest moral advantage it introduced was trial by a man's peers. There seems to have been no ancient nation in which the people felt any confidence in the administration of justice; in Athens, Rome, and Carthage, we find the same indignant complaint,

That judges still the poisonous bane imbibe,
And every hand grows callous with a bribe.

But the invention of trial by a person's peers restored to the people that reliance on justice which is the best security for public morals. Even the absurd custom, wager of battle, was not a useless part of the moral discipline that fitted mankind for their present state of social happiness; a solemn appeal to the judgment of God kept alive that belief in a superintending

providence, which is the most important element in practical religion.

The disadvantages of the feudal system are evident. Itself the offspring of conquest, it kept alive a spirit of military adventure, exalted the martial virtues far above all others, and caused continual wars, public and private. Still but for this spirit, the very names of right and privilege might have perished in Europe as they have done in Asia. Had Charlemagne left to his successors the same power over his vassals that he possessed himself, Europe would probably be now under an universal despotism.

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